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# Rural Social Organization in a Spanish-American Culture Area

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## PREFACE

During the period from January 1, 1938, to August 1, 1939, except for a six-month interval, the writer was State Supervisor of Rural Research in New Mexico under a coöperative research agreement between the Division of Social Research in the Federal Works Progress Administration and the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts. In the summer of 1938 he submitted to Dr. T. J. Woofter, Jr., Coördinator of Rural Research, a proposed research project entitled "Social Organization in Doña Ana County, New Mexico." The purpose of the proposed study was to describe social organization in an area where the Spanish-American people comprise a large proportion of the total population. As originally outlined, the contemplated study was to be of a general nature with attention given to selected factors related to the social organization of the county chosen for study.

During the fall of 1938 preliminary work was begun on collecting data on the various agencies and institutions in the county. Meanwhile, it began to appear feasible to make a change in approach and to collect additional pertinent data so that the study could be expanded into a doctoral dissertation. As the work progressed it was decided to limit detailed description and analysis to a group of Spanish-American villages and hamlets which did not have any surrounding open-country population, and to study in detail the social organization of these centers in an attempt to discover the social-cultural processes determining the social organization. Late in 1940 the completed study, under the title *Rural Social Organization in a Spanish-American Culture Area*, was submitted to the University of Wisconsin as a doctoral dissertation. This monograph is a revision of that dissertation. In the revision the first four chapters have been condensed and are presented as Chapter I. Some of the figures, all of the appendix tables, and the bibliography included in the original version have been omitted. The most pertinent sources listed in the bibliography can be found in Lyle Saunders' *A Guide to Materials Bearing on Cultural Relations in New Mexico*, The University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque. 1944. Anyone interested in the detailed

data which have been omitted in the revision should consult the dissertation.

During the preliminary stages of the study, the writer made numerous field trips out into the county and visited all the villages and hamlets. The peculiarities and similarities of the various centers were observed, as well as the relation of these centers to other locality groups and to the open-country population. As a result of these visits two villages and six hamlets were selected for detailed study.

Historical and general background material pertaining to the study were obtained primarily from secondary sources, although to some extent also through personal interviews with both Anglo-American and Spanish-American persons well acquainted with the history of the selected centers and with conditions in the county in general. Data on agencies, institutions, and social organizations in the county were obtained through personal interviews with representatives and leaders of each of these. Personal interviews were also used to collect information concerning different locality groups.

Primary data relating to the households in the selected villages and hamlets were collected by the writer and two field workers during the spring and summer of 1939. A schedule was filled out during an interview with either the head or the wife of the head of a household. All the households in the eight villages and hamlets were visited and schedules were filled out for 297 of the 306 households. The remaining households either gave incomplete information or refused to give any information at all.

Data on the social-cultural processes were obtained almost entirely through interviews. Field workers who collected data on the schedules were instructed to make written notes of any information volunteered by the interviewee which might aid in analysis of the data on the schedules and which might conceivably add to an understanding of social organization in the centers. At every available opportunity the writer himself went out into the field to help obtain schedules. This was done primarily in order to obtain first-hand information concerning the people studied, but also in order better to interpret the data on the schedules. By this procedure much information was gathered which

related to the social-cultural processes determining social organization. This information, and knowledge gained through analysis and interpretation of the data on the schedules, raised new questions to be answered. Additional data needed were obtained through interviews made during the spring of 1940. A series of questions was formulated and answers were sought to them through interviews with people in the centers and with Anglo-American and Spanish-American residents outside the centers who were known to be able to throw light on the information needed. Such a procedure seemed the most practical for securing data on the social-cultural processes which had not been secured either from secondary sources or in connection with the filling out of the household schedules.

Reference should be made to certain difficulties encountered in making the interviews necessary to obtain data for the study. Before interviews were made, steps were taken to insure success in interviewing. The importance of having made the proper contacts before attempting to make interviews has been generally recognized in the field of social research. Such a step was immediately seen by the writer as being of vital significance in studying the Spanish-American villages and hamlets. Without the proper means of identification, it appeared likely that the desired information would not be given. Toward this end, the leaders in each center were approached and the nature and purpose of the study explained to them. Only then was interviewing begun.

The matter of establishing the proper contacts before the interviews took place was not the only problem faced in interviewing. Language difficulties had to be surmounted. A large proportion of the heads of the Spanish-American households and a still larger proportion of the wives of the heads were unable to understand or speak English. Since the writer and his field workers did not have sufficient mastery of the Spanish language to carry on interviews in Spanish, it was necessary to use interpreters. A number of Spanish-American boys or young men with at least some high school education were engaged for this purpose.

The use of Spanish-American interpreters, however, was not solely an expedient employed because of language difficul-



ties. These interpreters in most instances were needed for another reason, even in interviewing Spanish-American households where either the head or the wife of the head could speak and understand English. It was necessary to have an interpreter along, not because he could act as interpreter, but because he was a member of the cultural groups to which the household belonged. Without the interpreter, it would often have been impossible for the field workers to obtain information. The fact that the interviewer was accompanied by a Spanish-American tended to lull suspicions that otherwise would have made difficult the acquisition of information.

The writer wishes to express his appreciation to all the individuals who helped make this study possible, particularly certain persons at the University of Wisconsin. Dr. J. H. Kolb, under whose direction the dissertation originally was written, gave guidance and encouragement throughout the study. Dr. George W. Hill offered many valuable criticisms and suggestions. Dr. J. L. Gillin critically read the original manuscript, as did Dr. David L. Campa, formerly of the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts.

Acknowledgment for assistance in collecting the data in the field is due to Donald A. Erunell, Kenneth K. Kelley, and especially Harald A. Pedersen, who did the greater portion of the interviewing and showed much interest in the study.

The Division of Social Research in the Federal Works Progress Administration contributed financial assistance through the Cooperative Plan of Rural Research.

Appreciation also is expressed to the members of the households in the villages and hamlets studied and to other residents of Doña Ana County, New Mexico, who so graciously furnished information without which this study would not have been possible.

Finally, the writer wishes to acknowledge a debt of gratitude to one close personal friend and associate for suggestions and criticisms, for help in the tabulation of the data, for critically reading the manuscript, and for the patience and understanding shown throughout the study.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In his study of American regionalism, Dr. Howard W. Odum has described the "Southwest" as a cultural region long differentiated from the "South" and nearer West than South, including the four states of Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona. Because of its vastness the Southwest is less homogenous than the other major regions of the United States.<sup>1</sup> A vivid picture of the Southwest is given by Dr. Odum in the following words:

When we come to the great emerging *Southwest*, which surely is not East, nor West, not South, not North, we face the dilemma of finding accurate delineation for so great and diverse a region. We have pointed out that beyond a doubt this great "empire" is "American" in size and open spaces with its symbol and reality of "the West," its cradle of cowboy lore, its allegiance to the Old South, its Spanish origins and its historical romance with Mexico, its heroic military traditions and episodes, its great Indian territory and traditions, and its quick-growing cities and "bigger and better" motivations, of oil derricks and cattle ranges, cotton fields and turkey ranches. American, too, it is in the precivilization sense that it comprehends the basic examples of early American culture and of the anthropologist's "culture area."

Because "American" culture is so new in this vast region, and because Latin and Indian culture was so well imbedded there before the dominant group entered, there still remain more vestiges of the "foreign" civilization than in any other portion of the nation. This situation has been perpetuated to some extent by the presence of vast numbers of "Mexicans" in the present population—people of whom many have lived within the region for many generations, who speak the Spanish language and hold dear many of the Spanish culture traits so painstakingly taught them by patient Catholic padres, but who also retain many of the deeper feelings and more unobtrusive folkways of the Indians who have bequeathed them a high percentage of the blood which courses through their veins. Dominant though the "American" now is, his daily contact with a Latinized culture has had its inevitable effect in his speech, his manners, his ways of doing business, as well as in the names he gives the streets of his towns and his children.

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<sup>1</sup> Howard W. Odum, *American Social Problems*, Holt, N. Y., 1939, p. 128.

Here two great culture systems have met and clashed and fused and are still in process of clashing and fusing. Here the elements in that typically American situation described as the "melting pot" are clearly drawn because of the relatively small numbers of culture systems involved and because of the distinct nature of those systems. Here, in a truly cultural sense, is found and may be observed the last frontier. In these elements the Southwest is American; in the further sense of bringing into contact the two culture systems which dominate the Western Hemisphere and affording a testing ground and experimental field, here is an opportunity for the "America" of the north, the giant of the western political world, to observe and select cultural elements and traits which will bring this nation into closer understanding and sympathy with that older "America" of the south, Latin America, which the circumstances of geography and politics have decreed must be our closest neighbor of the future, with all the implications of that fact. Here we have a blending of the two Americas, a circumstance which makes the region less "American" in the sense of the United States than any other, but from the point of view of the Hemisphere, the most truly American of all possible regions.<sup>2</sup>

The above quotation is not only a very appropriate characterization of the Southwest as a region but also of New Mexico, one of the states included in the region. In this State three cultures exist, namely, the Anglo-American, the Spanish-American, and the Indian.<sup>3</sup> Large numbers of Indians reside in other states, but none has such a great proportion of Spanish-Americans as New Mexico. Spanish is spoken freely in the areas where Spanish-Americans reside, and both English and Spanish are official languages in the state.

### THE PROBLEM

The Spanish-Americans were for many generations the ruling group in New Mexico. With the coming of the Anglo-Americans their power dwindled, and with it went much of what has been characteristic of the Spanish-American culture of the past. Today large numbers of the Spanish-Americans

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 128-129.

<sup>3</sup> Throughout this paper the term "Anglo-American" refers to that portion of the white race which is primarily English-speaking. "Spanish-American" is a term used by most people in the Southwest to designate that group of people which is primarily Spanish-speaking, and which in most other parts of the United States is known as "Mexican."

reside in small hamlets and villages to an extent that makes for a unique type of social organization.

Until quite recently very little had been done along the lines of systematic study of social organization in areas where there is a large proportion of Spanish-Americans. Lately, increased interest has been shown in the sociological relationships of this cultural group and in its relation to other groups. A number of studies have been made in New Mexico which present interesting facts relating to the subject.<sup>4</sup> This study is an attempt to contribute, in a meager way, toward one small gap in the available knowledge in the field.

The fundamental purpose of the study was to discover the nature of rural social organization in a Spanish-American area in New Mexico and to discover the role of the social-cultural processes in determining such social organization. Specifically, answers were sought to the following questions: (1) What place do the community, the neighborhood, and the hamlet and village occupy in the social organization in the area? (2) What are the social institutions and agencies which play an important part in social organization and how are they related to the wider social organization? (3) What are the characteristics of selected hamlets and villages and of the population of these centers? (4) What are the social-cultural processes which help to explain the existence of unique features of social organization in the area?<sup>5</sup>

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As early as 1530 the Spanish conquerors of Mexico heard reports of large cities and fabulous wealth in the unknown North. These reports led to Coronado's expedition in 1540. No large cities and no great wealth were found, and the unsuccessful expedition returned to Mexico in 1542.<sup>6</sup> And for forty

<sup>4</sup> See the writer's dissertation for reference to such studies.

<sup>5</sup> A discussion of the first two of these four questions is of interest primarily to the professional sociologist. They are therefore treated only very briefly in this paper. For more detailed treatment see the study on which this monograph is based.

<sup>6</sup> Lansing B. Bloom and Thomas C. Dornelly, *New Mexico History and Civics*, The University Press, Albuquerque, 1933, pp. 20-31.



years after the expedition, little or no interest was shown in the Pueblo country to the north. Then, toward the end of the sixteenth century, religious and economic motives became factors in the settlement of New Mexico. In 1598, Don Juan de Oñate brought a group of colonists to northern New Mexico, where they eventually settled at San Gabriel.<sup>7</sup> Thus was begun in New Mexico the first permanent establishment of European civilization, with a new language, a new form of government, and other cultural benefits.

New Mexican history from 1610 to 1680 may be called "the great missionary era." *Padres* followed the soldiers and built many missions, some of which are still standing and in use.<sup>8</sup> But, in 1680, the Pueblos revolted, and after driving out their Spanish conquerors, destroyed much of the material culture introduced by the Spaniards. The revolt was, however, shortlived, and after the suppression of a second uprising in 1696, New Mexico remained under Spanish rule until Mexico achieved her independence from Spain in 1821.<sup>9</sup> In this period the Spanish culture, with modifications to suit the new conditions, became firmly established in New Mexico. For over a century and a quarter nothing occurred to disturb the dominance of the Spanish culture, the effects of which are so noticeable in New Mexico today.

The twenty-five years of Mexican rule, until the American conquest in 1846, were marked by a significant development of trade. Mexican independence permitted commerce with the United States. The first successful trading expedition from Missouri to Santa Fe was conducted in 1821 by William Becknell, founder of the Santa Fe Trail. Trade across the prairies developed rapidly and increased even more after the American occupation.<sup>10</sup> Culturally, New Mexico was still tied to Mexico, but in her economic life she was turning more and more to the United States.

The development of trade routes with the United States

<sup>7</sup> Hubert H. Bancroft, *History of Arizona and New Mexico*, the History Company, San Francisco, 1889, pp. 110-111.

<sup>8</sup> Bloom and Donnelly, *op. cit.*, pp. 91-96.

<sup>9</sup> Bancroft, *op. cit.*, pp. 174-177.

<sup>10</sup> L. Bradford Prince, *A Concise History of New Mexico*, The Torch Press, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 1914, pp. 167-168.

during the period under consideration was of great importance in the rise of the problem discussed in this monograph. Contacts with the United States created economic opportunities which led to migration into New Mexico from the East. For many years the Spanish culture remained dominant, but events were bringing about the establishment of two major cultural groups. Gradually, the position of the Spanish-Americans was changed from that of a ruling group to what, in some degree, may be called a subject people.

Under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, ratified on May 30, 1848, New Mexico became a part of the United States. Choice of citizenship was given to the residents of the area.<sup>11</sup> There was some discontent on the part of the inhabitants, but most of them were satisfied in their new relations, since they were given generous recognition in the new government and their old laws, customs, religion, language, and civic rights were scrupulously respected.<sup>12</sup> This recognition in the governmental machinery and the respect given to existing cultural institutions is, no doubt, a major reason why the Spanish culture continued in New Mexico.

New Mexico became a state in 1912. The constitution of the state gave thorough protection to the Spanish-American citizens with respect to political rights and educational opportunities.<sup>13</sup> Yet constitutional provisions do not always serve to promote rapid social change in a group that has its roots in a culture that has been several centuries in the making.

The place of the Spanish-Americans in the New Mexico setting can further be indicated by brief references to certain geographical features of the State and to the growth and distribution of the population during the last century.

New Mexico is a state of nearly 122,000 square miles. It is almost square in outline. Elevations range from about 3,000 feet in the southeastern corner to a little over 13,000 feet at the top of the highest mountains. The state is traversed approximately through the center from north to south by the

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<sup>11</sup> Ralph Emerson Twitchell, *Leading Facts of New Mexico History*, The Torch Press, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, 1911, Vol. 2, pp. 265-277.

<sup>12</sup> Bloom and Donnelly, *op. cit.*, p. 210.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 239.

Rio Grande. Generally speaking, "New Mexico consists of high plateaus or mesas, with numerous mountain ranges, canyons, and valleys; some of the valleys are large enough to make possible the carrying on of extensive agricultural operations under irrigation."<sup>14</sup> Practically all of the farming not carried on under irrigation is being done by dry-farming methods under a normal seasonal precipitation varying from approximately eight to twenty inches, with a long growing season in the lower altitudes, a very short one in the higher altitudes. Crops adapted to the unirrigated sections are few in number because of the lack of sufficient moisture and the short growing season. On the other hand, in the irrigated valleys, with the moisture factor largely under the control of the farmer, the number of crops that can be grown is much larger and the crops are more varied in type, and in the mountainous irrigated districts still more crops of more different sorts can be grown.<sup>15</sup>

The climate of the state and its effect on agricultural production are important from the standpoint of the distribution of the Spanish-Americans in New Mexico. In the early days of colonization, the number of different crops which could be grown was considerably more limited than at the present time, and the early colonists were largely restricted in their agricultural pursuits to areas where some form of irrigation was possible. This fact explains why Spanish colonization was limited to a narrow ribbon of settlements along the river valleys. Not only were the early Spanish settlements in the river valleys, but it is in these same areas that the largest proportion of Spanish-Americans is found in New Mexico today, especially along the Rio Grande and its tributaries.

Population growth in New Mexico was slow prior to the time that the area became a part of the United States. Since that time the population has increased from 61,547 in 1850 to 531,818 in 1940.<sup>16</sup> This growth was primarily due to migration from other areas in the United States, but it was also in

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<sup>14</sup> Charles E. Linney, Fabian Garcia, and E. C. Hollinger, *Climate as It Affects Crops and Ranges in New Mexico*, Bulletin 132, New Mexico Agricultural Experiment Station, March, 1930, p. 4.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>16</sup> Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, *Population*, First Series, p. 1.

part due to the natural increase of the Spanish-Americans and to a large immigration of people from Mexico.

It is difficult to say just what the proportions of Spanish-Americans and Anglo-Americans have been at various times since New Mexico was opened to outsiders. However, it is safe to assume that nearly all of the 61,000 inhabitants recorded by the Federal Census of 1850, Indians not included, were of Spanish or Mexican origin, because the immigrants to New Mexico from the United States were never very numerous in the decades immediately preceding the annexation of the territory, and certainly very few of those who did enter the territory in that period tended to contribute to the natural increase. Even as late as 1880 nearly 85 per cent of the inhabitants of New Mexico were born in the state, according to data given in Federal Census reports.

No accurate data are available to the proportion of Spanish-Americans in the state during recent decades. In the 1930 Federal Census, persons of Mexican birth or parentage who were not returned as white or Indian were designated as "Mexican" and included in the general class of "other races." This does not give an accurate picture because it does not include a very large proportion of those people who, though they are not of Mexican birth or parentage, nevertheless do belong to that cultural group which is called Spanish-American. The best estimates, therefore, are in all probability those of the New Mexico Department of Public Health. This department has estimated the percentage of Spanish-Americans in the non-Indian population in each county. These percentages have been based on the school census for the years 1932-1933, 1933-1934, and 1934-1935.<sup>17</sup> On the basis of the estimated percentages, it is calculated that the total Spanish-American population in New Mexico in 1930 was 207,833, or 49.1 per cent of the total population.

The distribution of the Spanish-American population in the state is fully as important as the total number. Table 1 shows the estimated proportions of Spanish-Americans in the total

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<sup>17</sup> These estimates by the New Mexico Department of Public Health have been obtained directly from the Department.

non-Indian population and the calculated number of Spanish-Americans by counties.

From Table 1 it will be seen that a number of counties in New Mexico have a large proportion of Spanish-Americans in the total non-Indian population. On the whole, the counties are those which are traversed by the Rio Grande and its tributaries

TABLE 1

NON-INDIAN POPULATION, ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF SPANISH-AMERICANS IN NON-INDIAN POPULATION, AND CALCULATED NUMBER OF SPANISH-AMERICANS, BY COUNTIES, NEW MEXICO, 1930

County	Non-Indian Population*	Percentage of Spanish-Americans†	Number of Spanish-Americans‡
Bernalillo	44,324	53.8	23,846
Carson	3,283	45.0	1,477
Chaves	19,507	12.9	2,516
Colfax	19,153	45.4	8,695
Curry	15,804	4.2	661
De Baca	2,872	23.8	689
Dona Ana	27,301	64.6	17,637
Eddy	15,837	33.2	5,258
Grant	9,046	57.7	5,190
Guadalupe	7,027	84.6	5,943
Harding	4,421	51.8	2,290
Hidalgo	5,023	40.3	2,049
Lea	6,144	0.2	49
Lincoln	1,196	43.4	510
Luna	6,247	58.0	3,623
McKinley	11,081	37.6	4,166
Mora	10,322	95.3	9,827
Otero	7,071	36.6	2,590
Quay	10,828	22.9	2,480
Rio Arriba	17,825	91.5	16,340
Roosevelt	11,097	0.4	44
Sandoval	8,214	85.7	6,975
San Juan	6,551	18.4	1,202
San Miguel	2,585	82.0	2,120
Santa Fe	19,154	68.2	13,049
Sierra	3,184	58.7	1,863
Socorro	9,442	84.7	7,986
Taos	13,629	93.5	12,743
Torrance	9,269	48.9	4,533
Union	11,025	20.3	2,233
Valencia	12,962	78.0	10,110

\* Computed from the Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, *Population*, Vol. 1, p. 730, and from the Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, *The Indian Population of the United States and Alaska*, p. 29.

† Obtained from the New Mexico Department of Public Health and based on the school census for the years 1932-1933, 1933-1934, and 1934-1935.

‡ Calculated from the estimated percentages in column three.

Counties on the western and eastern borders of the state, especially the latter, tend to have a small proportion of Spanish-Americans.

The fact that there is a large number of Spanish-Americans in New Mexico and that these people are concentrated in certain areas makes for interesting cultural variations, and it also creates pertinent social problems within the state. A knowledge of social organization in an area where a large proportion of the population is Spanish-American should be of interest to sociologists, both from the standpoint of its theoretical implications and from the standpoint of the solution of problems growing out of the cultural variations which exist.

### DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

In the preceding paragraphs brief consideration has been given to historical developments in New Mexico as they relate to the problem of the study. It now remains to show very briefly what relation the area with which this study deals bears to these historical developments.

#### *The Area*

The area included in this study is limited to Doña Ana County, New Mexico. The county is located in the southern part of the state, bordering on Texas and the Republic of Mexico (Fig. 1). It ranked tenth in the state, in 1930, with reference to the percentage of Spanish-Americans in the total non-Indian population. Only three counties at that time had a larger number of people in this cultural group.

No attempt has been made in this study to consider Doña Ana County as representative of the wider Spanish-American area in New Mexico. It was estimated in 1930 that fifteen of the thirty-one counties in the state had over 50 per cent of Spanish-Americans in the total non-Indian population. These counties cover 54,657 square miles, or 44.6 per cent of the total area of the state. It is highly improbable that any one county could be selected that would be representative of such

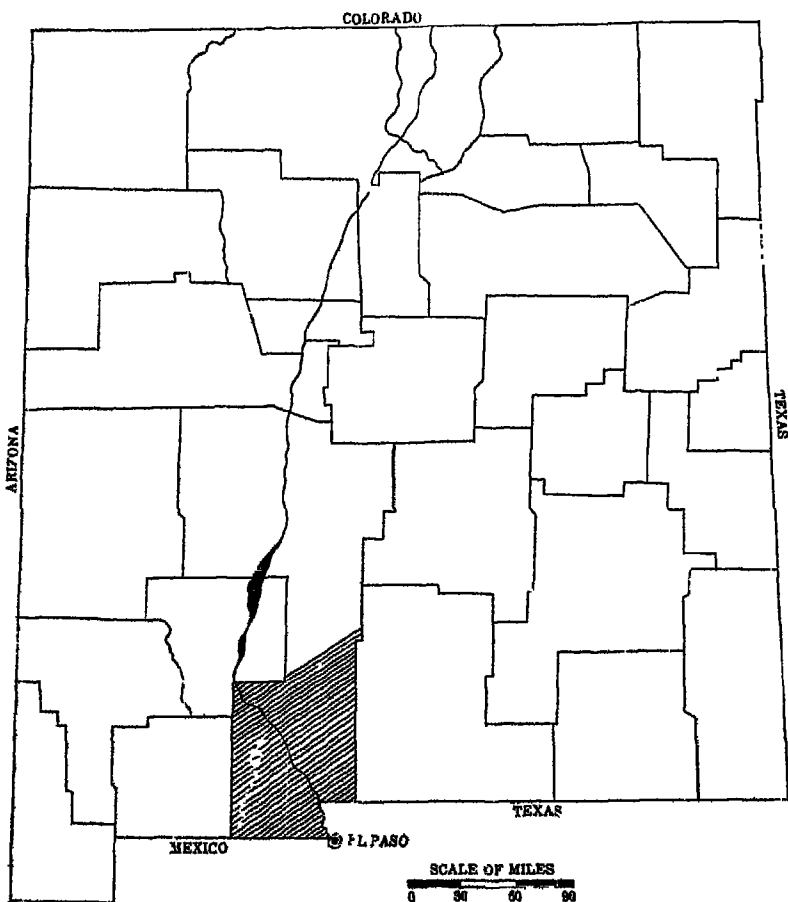


FIGURE 1  
Location of Doña Ana County

a large area. Therefore, no attempt will be made to apply the results of this study to the Spanish-American area of the state as a whole.

In order to understand the nature of rural social organization in Doña Ana County and to discover the role of social-cultural processes in determining such social organization, it is necessary to give a brief description of selected factors pertaining to the county as a whole. These factors include topographical features, the history of the county, population characteristics, agriculture, the population centers, transportation and communication facilities, and economic agencies.

### *Topography*

Early trade routes to northern New Mexico followed the river valley extending through the county. Lack of rainfall delayed settlement until irrigation could be put into practice and has resulted in the type of agriculture carried on in the county. This lack of precipitation and the resulting type of agriculture have made for a concentration of the population in or near the irrigated area. On the other hand, the presence of the Rio Grande with its flood waters was originally responsible for the concentration of some of the population in small centers on the mesas adjoining the river.

Doña Ana County is traversed from northwest to southeast by the Rio Grande, with a narrow strip of land, averaging two miles in width, under irrigation along the river. The area outside the irrigated lands is sparsely vegetated, due to the lack of adequate rainfall. The precipitation varies between eight and ten inches along the Rio Grande Valley and is slightly higher over the mesas, foothills, and mountains. Most of the rainfall occurs from July to November, inclusive. The mean temperature of the lower districts is about 58 to 60 degrees, with a maximum of about 100 degrees in the summer and approaching zero in the winter.<sup>18</sup> The soils in the irrigated area consist of alluvial deposits laid down by the Rio Grande. The varying mass of sediment brought down by the river has resulted in an extreme complexity of soils. In general the soils

<sup>18</sup> C. E. Linzey, Garcia, and Hollinger, *op. cit.*, p. 22.



are very productive, and the area is well suited to any crop which can be grown within the limits of climatic adaptation.<sup>19</sup>

### *History*

The history of Doña Ana County is important because of its relation, direct and indirect, to the social organization of the county. Historical developments were the cause of the presence of two divergent cultural groups. The concentration of a large part of the Spanish-American population in small villages and hamlets has been due partly to historical factors. The same may be said of the agriculture which is carried on in the area. Finally, the social-cultural processes which determine rural social organization in the county must be interpreted in the light of historical developments.

The Spaniards undoubtedly were the first white men to enter the county. The earliest recorded visit is that of Oñate, who stopped in the vicinity of what is now Mesilla on his expedition into northern New Mexico in 1598. But for over two hundred years after this first expedition no settlement was made. After several unsuccessful attempts by the Spanish settlers, in the vicinity of El Paso, to effect settlement of lands in what is now Doña Ana County, a permanent colony was established in 1843 at Doña Ana.<sup>20</sup>

After the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo the Mexican government encouraged settlers in New Mexico to return to Mexico, and in order to avoid American citizenship,<sup>21</sup> many of the native residents of Doña Ana moved across the river and, in 1850, founded the town of Mesilla about ten miles south of Doña Ana. Meanwhile negotiations under way between the United States and Mexico resulted in the Gadsden Purchase, effected late in 1853. Under this agreement the area into which settlers had moved from New Mexico now became a part of the United States and the settlers again found them-

<sup>19</sup> Byron Hunter, P. W. Cockerill, and H. B. Pingrey, *Type of Farming and Ranching Areas in New Mexico*, Part II, Bulletin 267, New Mexico Agricultural Experiment Station, December, 1939, p. 92.

<sup>20</sup> Twitchell, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, pp. 196-197.

<sup>21</sup> John H. Vaughan, *History and Government of New Mexico*, published by the author, State College, N. M., 1926, pp. 162-163.

selves American citizens.<sup>22</sup> The founding of Mesilla, because some of the inhabitants wanted to be in Mexican territory, is only one of several similar instances, although it is the one concerning which most historical information is available. Besides Mesilla, it appears that San Miguel, Old Chamberino, La Union, and probably La Mesa originated from the same cause.<sup>23</sup>

Doña Ana County was organized in 1852 by an act of the territorial legislature.<sup>24</sup> The growth of the county after its organization was greatly enhanced by the development of transportation and communication facilities. Mesilla became an important station on two overland stage routes,<sup>25</sup> and a stage line from Santa Fe made connection with the two lines at Mesilla. By 1877 New Mexico had telegraphic communications with both sides of the continent. The telegraph was followed by the railroad and, in 1881, the Santa Fe line, which had been extended from the north, reached El Paso.<sup>26</sup>

Rapid economic growth in the Mesilla Valley, after the coming of the railroad, still had to wait for another major development, namely, the construction of the Elephant Butte Reservoir. Prior to the construction of the dam, cultivation was carried on by irrigation through private effort. Each community built and maintained its own community ditch and diverted water directly from the river without any type of storage. The area under irrigation during that period was only a fraction of the area that is now being irrigated. It was not the efficient type of irrigation later carried on.

Lack of storage facilities created a further difficulty in that it was not possible to control the unruly Rio Grande during flood conditions. The remedy was the Elephant Butte Reservoir. This project was completed by the United States Reclamation Service in 1916, making possible irrigation of areas in New Mexico, Texas, and Chihuahua. At the same time it has

<sup>22</sup> Twitchell, *op. cit.* Vol. 3, p. 199.

<sup>23</sup> Maude E. McFie, *A History of the Mesilla Valley*, Senior Thesis, New Mexico State College, 1903, p. 30.

<sup>24</sup> Twitchell, *op. cit.*, Vol. 3, pp. 183-188.

<sup>25</sup> P. M. Baldwin, "A Short History of the Mesilla Valley," *New Mexico Historical Review*, 13: 318-319, July, 1938.

<sup>26</sup> Vaughan, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-192.

largely eliminated the danger of major floods. In fact, the floods along the Rio Grande were partially responsible for the location of the centers which are given special consideration in this study. Recently, a secondary storage dam has been constructed at Caballo, about twenty miles below the Elephant Butte Reservoir. This has made possible the development of electric power at the latter dam, the sale of which is used to liquidate the construction charges on the original dam.

### *Agriculture*

The type of agriculture has affected the distribution of the population, the occupational activities of the inhabitants, the type of land tenure, the degree of economic security prevailing among the different classes of people, and the attitudes of many of the people of the area—particularly the Spanish-Americans.

Practically all of the farming done in Doña Ana County is by irrigation, as the rainfall is too light to permit dry farming. Water for irrigation purposes is obtained from the Elephant Butte Reservoir. The irrigation water is diverted from the river into main canals at appropriate locations and then through laterals to the farms. Drainage is accomplished by means of open drains. The supply of irrigation water has always been adequate, although the low precipitation in recent years has caused some limitation to be placed on the use of the water.

The growing season, the soil fertility, and the supply of irrigation water are all favorable for a wide selection of crop enterprises. The crops grown in Doña Ana County, in order of importance, are cotton, alfalfa, corn, sorghums, vegetables, and fruit. Cotton is of such importance that the entire system of farming is built largely around it. The relatively high average yield is a factor favorable to the maintenance of a high percentage of the land in cotton.

The land area not under irrigation is more or less devoted to cattle grazing. Much of it is public domain. There are a number of relatively large ranches in the country. The cattle industry ranks second to cotton on a cash income basis. Sheep and goats are also raised on a few farms.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Linney, Garcia, and Hollinger, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

Reference has been made to the early efforts at irrigation. At the beginning of the present century this system pretty much prevailed. A large majority of the farmers were Spanish-American, cash production costs were low, operation and maintenance of community irrigation ditches were carried on by the labor of the users of the water, little farm machinery was in use, and a very small proportion of the farms employed labor.<sup>28</sup>

The agricultural situation resulting from this system is described in the following words:

The farm population practiced a mixed type of commercial and non-commercial farming. Farmers satisfied the major part of their food needs from their own farms and, in addition, raised some surplus crops for adjacent markets. Farmers were not dependent upon distant and fluctuating markets. The need for high cash returns was not great. Transfer of farms was relatively infrequent. Stability and security, rather than speculation and insecurity, were characteristics of the area.<sup>29</sup>

This was the situation at the beginning of the present century. Between 1910 and 1920, during which period the reclamation project was completed, changes occurred with respect to the nature of farming in the county. The number of farms increased slightly and the average crop acreage per farm increased appreciably. The proportion of full owners to all farm operators decreased, and the proportion of farms employing cash labor increased considerably. Cash expenditures for farms increased almost three-fold, while the crop acreage per farm increased only by half. The value of machinery per farm increased tremendously. Expenditures for farm fertilizer increased fourteen-fold. Mortgage indebtedness rose sharply.<sup>30</sup>

The tendency towards a more highly commercialized type of farming, which developed with the coming of the irrigation

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<sup>28</sup> *Reconnaissance Survey of Human Dependency on Resources in the Rio Grande Watershed*, Regional Bulletin No. 33, Conservation Economics Series No. 6, United States Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service, Region Eight, December, 1936, p. 99. This reference and subsequent references to the same source, unless otherwise noted, refer not only to Dona Ana County but to El Paso County, Texas, as well. The above report considers these two counties as one unit. However, the conditions in the two counties are similar enough to justify the use of the information given as applicable to Dona Ana County.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 100-102.

project between 1910 and 1920, was to a large extent the result of the imposition of a heavy financial burden, which was in turn due to the cost of the irrigation project. After the completion of the dam construction and water costs were so high that it became necessary to change to more efficient farming methods. This change might have been fully justified on economic grounds, but from the standpoint of sociological consequences it left much to be desired. Many small Spanish-American farm owners lost their land. Instead of being farm owners, they became either farm tenants or laborers, usually farm laborers. Some already lived in the villages, but many of the others were forced to move there or to remain on their former farms either as tenants or laborers.

The development of the Elephant Butte irrigation project was not the only important factor in the changing agricultural economy in Doña Ana County during the present century. A second very important factor was the introduction of cotton in 1918. This development accelerated and intensified the process which the creation of the irrigation project had started earlier. In other words, the introduction of cotton made possible a still more highly commercialized type of farming. The importance of the construction of the irrigation project and the introduction of cotton is seen from the following quotation:

Cotton completed the process initiated by the construction of the irrigation project: the process by which the commercially isolated and stable agricultural community of 1900 and 1910 was annexed to a commercial system of industrially organized production and a world market. In this process the irrigation project may be regarded not as a casual but as an instrumental factor. It was the instrument by which this essentially self-sufficing area was opened to commercial exploitation. The establishment, via the first investment, of a legal claim upon the resources of the area and the labor of its inhabitants, a claim which could not immediately be satisfied, led to the dispossession of the natives, and their replacement by American settlers financed by American capital. These settlers, with cash obligations to meet, and with aspirations toward a mode of living requiring large amounts of cash, constituted a new and large market both for the sale of consumption goods and the investment of capital. The dispossessed Spanish-Americans, with no other means of livelihood than the sale of their labor, constituted the necessary cheap labor supply, supplemented by importation of labor from old Mexico. Since they were

now to a greater extent dependent upon cash, they constituted an additional market for consumption goods. In addition, a large area not previously under cultivation was subjugated, settled and put to intensive use.<sup>81</sup>

The net result for Doña Ana County has been an economy that has been detrimental to certain segments of the population. All that is necessary is to visit some of the Spanish-American villages along the Rio Grande to discover this. The development of the irrigation project and the introduction of cotton have undoubtedly made it possible to support a much larger population than would otherwise have been the case. But the consequences have not all been for the better, at least so far as the Spanish-Americans are concerned. One writer in discussing the situation states the problem as follows:

. . . The result, at the present time, is that the area contains a large but highly stratified population directly dependent upon the land resources, either as farm operators or farm laborers. This population, in consequence of the devotion of the land to the production of cash crops, constitutes a large and presumably profitable market for commercial purveyors of all types of goods, services and capital. A small minority of the resident population has a relatively high living standard but so much insecurity that its activities may be most accurately characterized as gambling, with the stakes high income versus bankruptcy. The great majority of the resident population is supported at a permanently low income level and a high insecurity level.<sup>82</sup>

The place of the irrigation project and of cotton in the agricultural situation in Doña Ana County has been discussed at some length because it is vitally significant. It is in the light of this situation that the findings of this study to a large extent must be interpreted.

### *Population*

Social organization in Doña Ana County is related to the distribution of the population and to the presence of two divergent cultural groups. The latter is important because of its relation to the social-cultural processes which affect social organization.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 107-109.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

The population of Doña Ana County has been increasing rapidly since 1910, the first census year that the area of the county was the same as at present (Table 2). The most rapid increase occurred between 1920 and 1930. Since 1930 the percentage increase has been small compared with the increase during the two preceding decades.

TABLE 2  
POPULATION OF DOÑA ANA COUNTY, 1910-1940

Year	Population	Increase over preceding Census	
		Number	Per cent
1910	12,893	—	—
1920	16,543	3,655	28.3
1930	27,455	10,907	65.9
1940	30,411	2,956	10.8

Data for 1920 to 1930 taken from the Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, *Population*, Vol. I, p. 730, and data for 1940 from the Sixteenth Census of the United States, 1940, *Population*, First Series, New Mexico, p. 2.

The population density of Doña Ana County in 1940 was 8.0 persons per square mile as compared with 4.4 persons for the State as a whole. However, the population density taken for the whole county has little meaning since the greatest portion of the county is very sparsely populated. In general, the population is concentrated in the irrigated area or in small population centers bordering this area. At the time this study was made, practically the only people living outside this area were those residing on isolated ranches.

Doña Ana County is predominantly rural. In 1940 only slightly over one-fourth of the population was urban. Nearly two-fifths of the total population was rural-farm while only about three tenths was rural-nonfarm. The population of Las Cruces, the only urban center, was 3,939 in 1920, 5,811 in 1930, and 8,385 in 1940.

According to the Federal Census, of the 27,455 persons in Doña Ana County in 1930, 11,498, or 41.9 per cent, were native white primarily of native parentage.<sup>23</sup> There were only

<sup>23</sup> Data are taken from the 1930 census because the classifications used in the 1940 Census give a less clear picture.

306, or 1.1 per cent, foreign-born White and 649, or 2.4 per cent, Negro.<sup>34</sup> The remainder were classified as "other races."

Nearly all in this category were listed as "Mexican," there being 14,765 of this group, 153 Indians, 64 Japanese, and 20 others the race of which cannot be ascertained. The "Mexicans" constituted 53.8 per cent of the total population in the county. It is not possible to break down the "other races" category for the urban, the rural-farm, and the rural-nonfarm population, but in view of the small number of persons other than "Mexican" in the category, it is still possible to work out fairly accurate proportions. Persons classified under "other races" constitute 21.5 per cent of the urban population (Las Cruces), 59.6 per cent of the rural-farm population, and 69.4 per cent of the rural-nonfarm population. In other words, the "Mexican" population is concentrated in the villages and hamlets in the county.

The proportion of "Mexicans" given above does not give a true picture of the proportion of Spanish-Americans in the county, since "Mexicans" according to the 1930 Federal Census include only persons of Mexican birth or parentage who were not definitely returned as white or Indian. There are a large number of Spanish-Americans in the county not included in the category "Mexican." The estimates of the New Mexico Department of Health, based on the school census for the years 1932-1933, 1933-1934, and 1934-1935, set the proportion of Spanish-Americans in Doña Ana County at 64.6 per cent of the total non-Indian population. On the basis of the total non-Indian population of 27,302, in 1930, this would mean that there were 17,736 Spanish-Americans. This is a considerably larger figure than that given under "Mexican" in the 1930 census.

The age and sex distribution of the total population of Doña Ana County in 1930 is shown in Figure 2. This distribution is closely similar to the distribution for the total population of New Mexico at that time.

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<sup>34</sup> The Negro population in the county is concentrated in one area of Las Cruces, in the village of Vado, and in several open country settlements. These settlements, however, are very small and are widely scattered.



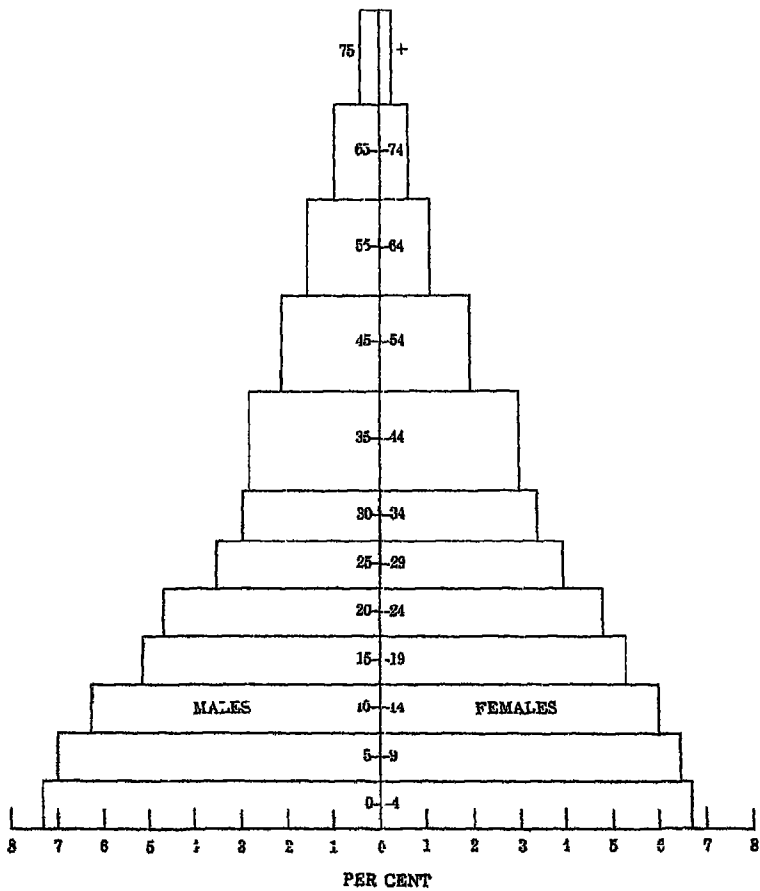


FIGURE 2  
Age and Sex Distributions of the Population of Doris Ana County, 1930

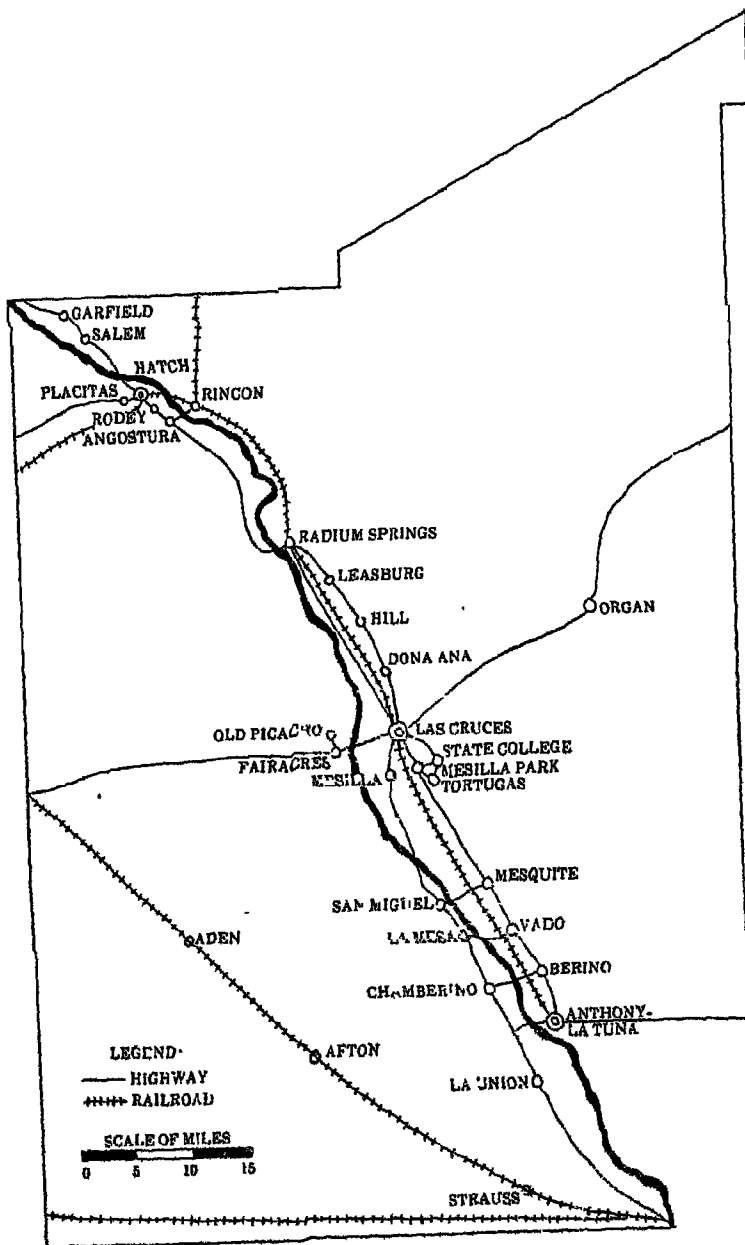


FIGURE 3  
Service Centers of Dona Ana County

*Service Centers*<sup>35</sup>

The population centers of the county are concentrated in the Rio Grande Valley either in the irrigated area or on the edge of the mesas which border the irrigated area (Fig. 3). Las Cruces, the county seat, is located almost in the center of the county. The only incorporated village is Hatch, located in the northern part of the county. In addition to Las Cruces and Hatch there are twenty-five unincorporated villages or hamlets.<sup>36</sup> All of these are located in the valley, with one exception, Organ, a small center located about fifteen miles northeast of Las Cruces on U. S. Highway 70. The names of the centers with their estimated population at the time this study was made are shown in Table 3:

TABLE 3  
NAMES AND POPULATION OF SERVICE CENTERS, DOÑA ANA COUNTY, 1939

Name	Population	Name	Population
Angostura	69	Mesilla	950
Anthony-La Tuna	700	Mesilla Park	500
Berino	152	Mesquite	225
Chamberino	102	Organ	60
Doña Ana	452	Old Picacho	102
Fairacres	35	Placitas	263
Garfield	150	Radium Springs	25
Hatch	1,050	Rincon	525
Hill	25	Rodey	241
La Mesa	565	Salem	175
La Union	200	San Miguel	500
Las Cruces	8,385	State College	235
Leasburg	42	Tortugas	350
Vado		350	

The centers have been classified according to size (Table 4). Las Cruces, with a population of 8,385, accounts for 51 per cent of the total population of all the centers, and Hatch, with an estimated population of 1,050, accounts for 6.4 per cent. The ten unincorporated villages and the fifteen hamlets account for 31.4 and 11.2 per cent respectively. The average size of the unincorporated villages is 516 and of the hamlets 123 persons.

<sup>35</sup> This term is used for convenience but it is not strictly applicable, since there are a number of population centers without any services.

<sup>36</sup> There are three railroad stops on the Southern Pacific line in the southern part of the county which are also shown in Figure 3 but these only provide postal facilities to the ranchers, in addition to meeting the railroad needs.

TABLE 4  
POPULATION OF SERVICE CENTERS, CLASSIFIED BY TYPE OF CENTER,  
DOÑA ANA COUNTY, 1939

Type of center	Number of centers	Number per center	Population Total per class	Per cent of total
City	1	8,385	8,385	51.0
Incorporated village	1	1,050	1,050	6.4
Unincorporated village	10	516	5,155	31.4
Hamlets*	15	123	1,838	11.2

\* Hamlet here means a center between 25 and 250 population.

### *Transportation and Communication*

Not all the centers have railroad or bus facilities. A number of centers are located some distance from the railroad and from the highways over which the buses travel.

There are three telephone exchanges. These are located at Las Cruces, Hatch, and Anthony. Most of the telephones in the county are located in Las Cruces, Hatch, Anthony, Mesilla Park, and State College. However, nine of the ten unincorporated villages and eight of the fifteen hamlets have at least one. Very few of the households in the centers, other than those mentioned above, have telephones. Even in those centers a large proportion of the households have none. The telephone subscribers are almost entirely Anglo-American.

Las Cruces has a Western Union telegraph office in addition to the one operating in connection with the Santa Fe Railroad. Five other centers having telegraph services have it only in connection with the railroad.

There are three newspapers in the county, two in Las Cruces and one in Hatch. One Las Cruces newspaper is a daily and Sunday paper. The other Las Cruces paper and the Hatch paper are weeklies. Perhaps more important than the local papers are those from outside the county. Two El Paso and two Albuquerque dailies have a large number of local subscribers. The El Paso papers especially cater to Doña Ana County because of proximity and many common interests. Much news from the county is found in these papers. In addition to the above papers there are also a Spanish daily news-

paper and a Spanish weekly newspaper, both published in El Paso, which circulate in the county, primarily in the vicinity of Las Cruces. Generally speaking, the newspapers only have a limited circulation. Relatively few of the Spanish-American households subscribe. A large proportion of the Spanish-Americans do not speak English, let alone read the language.

### *Economic Agencies*

Social organization in a given area is, to a large extent, dependent on and influenced by the economic services which are available. In Doña Ana County the one city, Las Cruces, has a much larger number of business firms than any other center.

Some primary services are provided in the unincorporated villages and hamlets and in the open country. It is Las Cruces, however, that provides specialized services. It has a trade area extending over most of the county, although the utilization of these services decreases as the distance from the center increases. In the northern part of the county much of the trade centers in Hatch. In the southern part some of the villages provide more services than is true of the villages as a whole. The situation in the southern part of the county is also complicated by proximity to El Paso, Texas. The retail trade area of that center very definitely extends into the southern part of Doña Ana County, and to some extent to other parts of the county. A large number of people in Las Cruces and its surrounding open-country area go to El Paso, not only for specialized services, but to supply primary needs as well.<sup>87</sup>

Industry is usually not important in agricultural villages.<sup>88</sup> This is true in Doña Ana County. Cotton gins, most of them coöperative, predominate. As a rule, they are located along the railroad, either in the population centers or in the open country. Other enterprises associated with cotton production include a cotton compress and a cottonseed oil mill. In addition to the enterprises developed as a result of cotton production,

<sup>87</sup> See J. H. Kolb and R. A. Polson, *Trends in Town-Country Relations*, Research Bulletin 117, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, September, 1933, pp. 27-32 for a discussion of this sort of tendency.

<sup>88</sup> J. H. Kolb and Edmund de S. Brunner, *A Study of Rural Society*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1933, p. 507.

there are a number of other manufacturing and processing plants. Most of them are small and of a varied nature.

Attention has now been given to the historical background and to a general description of the area being studied. It will now be possible to concentrate on the underlying purpose of the study and to seek answers to the specific questions which were raised in the first chapter and which form the central theme of this monograph. In other words, what is the nature of rural social organization in a Spanish-American area in New Mexico and what are the social-cultural processes which help determine such rural social organization?

### LOCALITY GROUPS IN DOÑA ANA COUNTY<sup>89</sup>

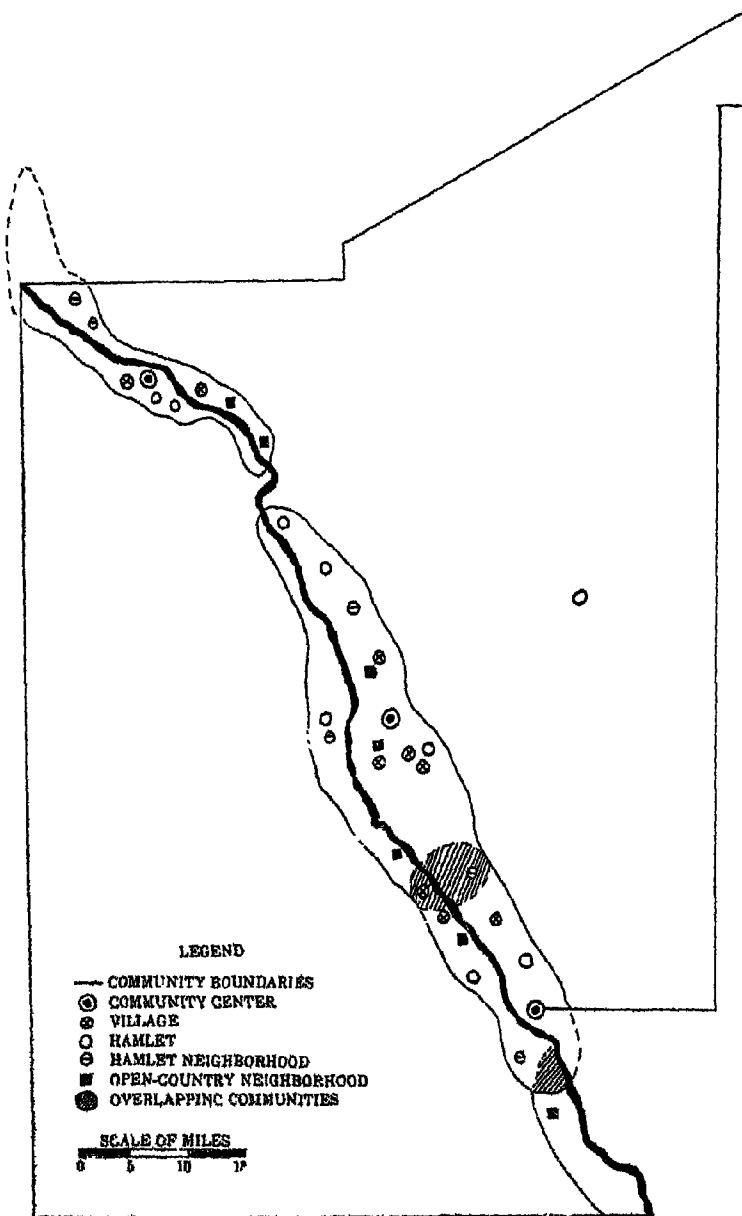
In addition to the city, the incorporated village, the ten unincorporated villages, and the fifteen hamlets mentioned in the previous chapter, there are also neighborhoods and communities in Doña Ana County. It now becomes necessary to delineate these last two types of locality groups and to show their relation to each other.

#### *Communities*

There are three definite community areas in Doña Ana County (Fig. 4). They include nearly all the population in the county. Within each area there are, in addition to the community center and the scattered open-country population, a number of definite locality groups. These consist of neighborhoods, hamlets, and villages.

The largest of the three communities is the one which has the city of Las Cruces as its center. This community covers the width of the irrigated section of the Rio Grande Valley and extends fifteen miles north, to Radium Springs, and about the same distance to the south. Within this larger area there are, in addition to Las Cruces, two open-country neighborhoods,

<sup>89</sup> This section is only a brief summary of a detailed discussion of the subject as presented in Chapter IV of the writer's doctoral dissertation upon which this monograph is based.



**FIGURE 4**  
**Locality Groups in Doña Ana County**

three hamlet neighborhoods, five hamlets, and five villages. In the open country around Las Cruces and around some of the smaller population centers are dispersed farmsteads. Las Cruces is the main service center for the people in the smaller centers and in the open country, particularly for those residing nearby. It is also the service center for the Hatch community area with respect to specialized services.

A second community area is the one just mentioned as being served to some extent by Las Cruces. It is centered around the incorporated village of Hatch. This community also stretches over the width of the irrigated territory and extends about fourteen miles to the south of Hatch, while to the north it extends the eleven miles to the county line and about an additional ten miles into the adjoining county. That part of the Hatch service area lying within Doña Ana County includes, in addition to Hatch, two open-country neighborhoods, two hamlet neighborhoods, two hamlets, and two villages. Except for such specialized services as may be obtained in Las Cruces, Hatch is the service center for the surrounding open-country population and for the population of the smaller centers insofar as these are unable to provide the necessary services.

The third community area is the one in which Anthony-La Tuna is the center. This community area extends across the irrigated valley. It reaches north about twelve miles, where it overlaps a little with the Las Cruces community area, and extends seven miles to the south, below La Union in Doña Ana County and approximately the same distance into El Paso County, Texas. Within the area are one open-country neighborhood, two hamlet neighborhoods, two hamlets, and three villages besides the community center.<sup>40</sup> Anthony-La Tuna serves the open-country population and that of the smaller centers in the area where these centers are not able to provide the necessary services. The community center, however, occupies a less important place from the standpoint of services than do the

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<sup>40</sup> A count of the hamlet neighborhoods and the villages mentioned as being included in the three community areas will show that the number is one more in each case than shown in Figure 4. This is because one of each is within the portion of the Las Cruces and Anthony-La Tuna areas which overlap with each other.



community centers in the other two community areas. This is because of its proximity to El Paso, Texas.

In addition to the three community areas which have been described, there is a narrow irrigated strip in the southern part of the county south of the Anthony-La Tuna area which is populated but which does not have any population centers. There is one open-country neighborhood in the area. The people go to the village of Canutillo, Texas, for some of their services, but are mostly within the larger service area of El Paso, Texas.

A question may be raised as to whether these communities are what is commonly called the rural community. The rural community concept has been accepted quite generally among rural sociologists and has been used to describe a type of locality-group organization which characterizes large parts of rural United States. Two quotations may be given to indicate the meaning which has been given to the concept. One reads as follows:

The term *rural community* has come to be used by sociologists to indicate the relationships existing between people and institutions in the area composed of a village and its surrounding farms. Such rural communities are typical in American agriculture in which farm families are dispersed upon their lands about a village or town which serves as a center for their buying, marketing, church-going, recreational, and other common activities. The farmer needs the village, and the village, in turn, existing because of the farmer's needs, needs him. The two, farm and village, form parts of a whole.<sup>41</sup>

Another definition of the rural community is stated in the following words:

A rural community consists of the social interaction of the people and the institutions in a local area in which they live on dispersed farmsteads and in a hamlet or village which forms the center of their common activities.<sup>42</sup>

These two quotations set forth the idea of the rural community as the concept is used in the United States. The

<sup>41</sup> W. G. Mather, T. H. Towneend, and Dwight Sanderson, *A Study of Rural Community Development in Waterville, New York*, Bulletin 608, Cornell University, Agricultural Experiment Station, June, 1934, p. 5.

<sup>42</sup> Dwight Sanderson, *The Rural Community*, Ginn, Boston, 1932, p. 481.

question is whether the community areas found in Doña Ana County conform to the concept as it has been expressed. The position taken by the writer is that this is not unqualifiedly the case.

As was mentioned above, there are several villages and hamlets in each community area in addition to the community center. The presence of these locality groups within the community does not necessarily violate the rural community concept. Elsewhere in the United States the rural community is often considered to include such small hamlets and villages, as well as neighborhoods. What makes the situation in Doña Ana County unique is the fact that there are so many hamlets and villages in a community and that some of the villages and the hamlets do not serve any open-country population. Thus, in the area studied, the community does not consist of "the relationships existing between people and institutions in the area composed of a village and its surrounding farms." Instead it consists of the relationships existing between people and institutions in the area composed of a main center *and its surrounding centers and farms.*

The question may now be raised as to whether some of the villages and hamlets, other than the designated community centers, may not be centers of smaller communities. In other words, are there not smaller communities within the three communities that have been described? The answer must be in the negative. There are two reasons why this position is taken. In the first place, a large proportion of the farm families are not "dispersed upon their lands about a village . . ." A large portion of the farm area in Doña Ana County is farmed not by small individual family units but by farm operators with large holdings. These holdings necessitate a large supply of farm laborers. Many of these laborers live in the hamlet or village centers rather than on the farms. The same may be said with respect to many of the farm tenants and owners. In some instances there is no open-country population around the small centers. The idea of a town-country relationship as set forth in the definitions of a rural community given above, therefore, does not have applicability for a large proportion of the persons directly engaged in agriculture in Doña Ana County.

In the second place, the concept of the rural community as set forth by Sanderson does not have full applicability in the area studied because in many, if not most, instances the inhabitants of the area, whether living on the farms or in the centers, find that their center does not serve "as a center for their buying, marketing, church-going, recreational, and other common activities." Some of these needs may be met in some centers, but often only a few of them, and in some instances practically none of them.

It was thus seen that the centers, other than the designated community center, in each of the three communities described, do not constitute rural community centers. There are, therefore, no other communities. The three larger areas are the only ones which are inclusive enough to be considered rural communities. These three areas alone have a great enough degree of self-sufficiency to have the town-country relationships which characterize the rural community. Yet, it must be remembered that in each case the relationship is one existing in an area composed of a main center and its surrounding small centers and farms. If this qualification is taken into consideration, the three communities in Doña Ana County may be considered as rural communities without violating the rural community concept because the center of each community does serve the people in the community area, whether they live in the open country or in hamlets or villages, and because there is a social interaction within these areas that tends to create a psychological basis for the community.

### *Neighborhoods*

In discussing the communities in Doña Ana County in the preceding section, it was pointed out that, in the existing community areas, there are a number of neighborhoods. These consist of two major kinds, *open-country* and *hamlet* neighborhoods. The open-country neighborhoods may be divided into two types, namely, *social* and *institutional* neighborhoods.<sup>48</sup> There are seven open-country neighborhoods

<sup>48</sup> The *social* neighborhoods as thought of here are "focal groups characterized by neighborliness, visiting and informal sociability, and various forms of organized social activity" and the *institutional* neighborhoods are "locality groups

and six hamlet neighborhoods in the county (Fig. 4). Of the former, five are social neighborhoods and two are institutional neighborhoods.

Three of the social neighborhoods are located on large farms. As has been stated, a large portion of the farm area in Doña Ana County is farmed by operators with large holdings rather than by individual families. In some instances the agricultural laborers on these farms live in nearby population centers. On the other hand, some of them live on these large farms, either in isolated dwellings or in small clusters. It is the clusters of families that are important here because they form what may be considered neighborhoods. These groups of families probably would not consider themselves as constituting neighborhoods because such a concept has little meaning to the people of the area. Yet even though the people would not think in terms of living in a neighborhood, these clusters, nevertheless, have some of the characteristics of one type of open-country neighborhood: namely, the social neighborhood, characterized by neighborliness, visiting, and informal sociability.

In addition to the three neighborhood groups discussed in the previous paragraphs, there are two other social neighborhoods. Both of these consist of a number of open-country Anglo-American families which primarily are bound together by sociability bonds. One is located in the southern part of the county, about two miles west of Canutillo, Texas. The other is about two miles southeast of the village of La Mesa.

The two institutional neighborhoods in Doña Ana County are located in the Las Cruces community area. They are San Isidro and a group of families living around an open-country store. The San Isidro neighborhood is mostly located east of U. S. Highway 85 about four miles north of Las Cruces and takes its name from the Catholic church, which in turn is named

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integrated about one or more local institutions, groups whose continuity was not insured until such institutions were developed, but whose institutions are now their chief reasons for existence . . ." (See J. H. Kolb and Edmund deS. Brunner, *A Study of Rural Society*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1935, pp. 50-51). The hamlet neighborhood is one which is centered around a small residence cluster with one or more local institutions. \*

after its patron saint. Most of the families are on small individual plots of land, but there is also some clustering of families, especially near the Catholic church. San Isidro is a large neighborhood, and there might be a question as to whether it should be classed as such. But the families are too scattered to be considered a rural community since many needs have to be met from the outside. The neighborhood is characterized by a high degree of family interrelationship, and kinship has been the basic force in establishing the neighborhood and in holding it together.

The neighborhood centered around Sample's store is located about two miles west of Las Cruces. It consists of the store and approximately twenty farm families scattered along a side road going from Fairacres to Mesilla. There was once a school near the store, but now the store is the only agency. Most of the needs of the families are met in Las Cruces and to some extent in Mesilla.

There are, then, only seven open-country neighborhoods in Doña Ana County. Space does not permit any detailed explanation for this situation but three plausible reasons may be given brief mention. In the first place, the number of open-country institutions and agencies in Doña Ana County is small. Secondly, a large proportion of the farm laborers, tenants, and owners live in some population center rather than on the farms. Finally, the population is concentrated in or near a small irrigated area with a relatively large number of population centers.

The large number of small population centers in relation to the size of the populated area is also a reason why there are almost as many hamlet neighborhoods as there are open-country neighborhoods. Not only is the former type nearly as numerous as the latter type, but it is more characteristic of rural locality-group organization in Doña Ana County.

The hamlet neighborhood, as defined in this study, consists of a small population center with from 25 to 250 people,<sup>44</sup> having one or more institutions, and the farm families clustered around this center. This type of neighborhood, for all prac-

<sup>44</sup> In this study, centers having 25 to 250 people are considered as *hamlets* and centers having 250 to 2,500 people as *villages*.

tical purposes, may be regarded as similar in characteristics to open-country neighborhoods centered around one or more institutions or agencies.<sup>45</sup> There may be no essential difference between the nature of the social processes which operate in the hamlet neighborhood and the hamlet or small village without any surrounding open-country population, but before the hamlet is considered as a neighborhood center in this study there must be both a center and surrounding farm families.

Six of the fifteen hamlets in the county form the nuclei of hamlet neighborhoods, namely, Garfield, Salem, Hill, Fairacres, La Union, and Mesquite. Around each of these centers a number of open-country families reside, and these families are considered a part of the locality group, of which the hamlet forms the center. Each hamlet has a number of institutions which serve both the families in the center and the families immediately surrounding the center. Yet, in spite of the fact that these six locality groups fit into the hamlet neighborhood classification, this does not mean that the people think of themselves as part of a neighborhood. Instead they think of the center as being a village. This is the term used to designate these centers in Doña Ana County regardless of size. The families in the center regard the surrounding families as associated with the village. Thus, what, from the standpoint of theory, may be thought of as hamlet neighborhoods are, in the minds of the people, small village centers with which the surrounding families are associated. Yet these small centers must not be considered rural community centers. Their services are too few and not specialized enough. They are within the service areas of larger centers.<sup>46</sup> Hill and Fairacres are in the Las Cruces service area, Garfield and Salem are in the Hatch service area, La Union is in the Anthony-La Tuna service area, and Mesquite is in both the Anthony-La Tuna and the Las Cruces service area.

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<sup>45</sup> Cf. J. H. Kolb, *Trends of Country Neighborhoods*, Research Bulletin 170, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, November, 1933, p. 4, and Dwight Sanderson and Warren S. Thompson, *A Study of Social Areas of Otsego County*, Bulletin 423, Cornell University, Agricultural Experiment Station, July, 1923, p. 22.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Kolb, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-5.

There are in Doña Ana County, then, five social neighborhoods, two institutional neighborhoods, and six hamlet neighborhoods. These locality groups conform to the neighborhood pattern which has been found to exist elsewhere in the United States. Dr. J. H. Kolb defines the neighborhood as "that first grouping beyond the family which has social significance and which is conscious of some local unity."<sup>47</sup> This criterion applies to the neighborhoods of Doña Ana County. These neighborhoods may differ in some respects. They may be bound by informal sociability ties, may be integrated around one or more local agencies, or may center around a hamlet, but they are all socially significant and do consist of people who are conscious of some unity associated with the neighborhood group. These groups are not numerous in Doña Ana County, but they are important and do have a place in the locality-group organization of the area.

### *Hamlets*

In the preceding discussion of hamlet neighborhoods it was shown that six of the fifteen hamlets in the county were neighborhood centers. The question may now be raised as to what place the remaining nine hamlet centers occupy in the social structure of the county. Three of these hamlets exist because of special circumstances. State College consists almost entirely of people connected with the New Mexico College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, and the great majority of the families reside adjacent to the college campus. Organ, a former mining village, is located about fifteen miles northeast of Las Cruces on U. S. Highway 70. Radium Springs is located about fifteen miles north of Las Cruces on U. S. Highway 85. It owes its existence to the presence of a mineral spring. Both Radium Springs and Organ have one or two agencies or institutions. There is no appreciable open-country population around these centers.

The remaining six hamlets, namely, Angostura, Rodey, Leasburg, Old Picacho, Berino, and Chamberino, are located on the mesas adjacent to the irrigated area in the valley. They

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<sup>47</sup> J. H. Kolb, *Rural Primary Groups*, Research Bulletin 51, Agricultural Experiment Station, University of Wisconsin, December, 1921, pp. 5-6.

are all predominantly Spanish-American. None of them has any surrounding open-country population such as is the case with respect to the hamlet neighborhood. These hamlets will receive detailed consideration in the next chapter. Before this is done, however, it is necessary to determine the place which villages (centers between 250 and 2,500 population) occupy in the social structure of Doña Ana County

### *Villages*

Table 4 shows that there are one incorporated village and ten unincorporated villages in the county. Two of these have been mentioned as the centers of town-country community areas. None of the other nine villages can be considered as community centers because their services are too few and not specialized to a sufficient degree for them to meet a majority of the needs of the people of the locality. Furthermore, some of them are centers without any surrounding open-country population. Four of them—La Mesa, Mesilla, Mesilla Park, and San Miguel—do have a surrounding open-country population for which they meet some needs but not to a sufficient extent for them to assume what may be called a measure of self-sufficiency.

The five remaining villages—Rincon, Doña Ana, Placitas, Tortugas, and Vado—have practically no open-country population in the surrounding area. Vado, in that it is a Negro center, is not characteristic of the villages without any open-country population, but the other four assume quite uniform characteristics. These four villages differ from the six hamlet centers without any open-country population only from the standpoint of size.

A picture has now been drawn of the social structure of Doña Ana County. In some respects there is considerable similarity to existing social organization in rural areas in some other parts of the United States. There are a number of neighborhoods, there are a number of hamlets and villages which serve the open-country population but which cannot be considered as rural community centers, and there are a number of rural community areas. These social groupings are not unique



to the area studied. But there are, in addition to these groups, six hamlets and five villages which do not have any surrounding open-country population which tie to these centers. One of the villages is Vado, the Negro center, which need not be given further consideration because it is not characteristic of the area. The other four villages are Doña Ana, Tortugas, Rincon. and Placitas. The hamlets are Angostura, Rodey, Leasburg, Old Picacho, Berino, and Chamberino. It is some of these hamlets and villages with which the major portion of this study is concerned because they are a unique phase of social organization which merits consideration

## CHAPTER II

### DESCRIPTION OF SELECTED VILLAGES AND HAMLETS

In discussing locality groups in the preceding section, it was shown that the rural community of Doña Ana County, New Mexico, does not play the important part that such communities, in the accepted sense of the term, play in other areas of the United States. Similarly, neighborhoods in Doña Ana County were shown to be limited in number. On the other hand, it was pointed out that there are in the county a large number of villages and hamlets. Only two of the villages can, in a true sense, be regarded as rural community centers. A number of the hamlets are neighborhood centers. Of the remaining villages and hamlets some were shown to be surrounded by open-country population but still could not be regarded as rural community centers. The other villages and hamlets are without any appreciable open-country population. There are four such villages and six such hamlets.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter treats selected social factors in the villages and hamlets which do not have any surrounding open-country population. A brief explanation, however, as to why these particular centers have been given special consideration, is necessary at this point.

It was with a definite purpose in mind that the type of centers mentioned above were chosen for study. In the first place, such centers are characteristic of Spanish-American areas in New Mexico, whereas some of the villages and hamlets which do have a surrounding open-country population approach more closely the geographical aspects of the rural community found in other parts of the United States. Secondly, by selecting centers with little or no open-country population, it was possible to rule out any influence which the open-country population might have on the social organization of the centers. It is the belief of the writer that the presence of some open-coun-

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<sup>1</sup> The four villages do not include Vado, the Negro center.

try population surrounding Spanish-American villages and hamlets in Doña Ana County does not affect the nature of social organization in these centers to any important extent. However, it was possible to bring out more clearly the social processes operating in the Spanish-American hamlets and villages by restricting the study to the centers without any surrounding open-country population.

With the above points in mind, two of the four villages and all of the six hamlets were studied in detail. The villages are Doña Ana and Placitas.<sup>2</sup> The hamlets are Angostura, Rodey, Leasburg, Old Picacho, Berino, and Chamberino. The location of these centers in the county with reference to the three community centers is shown in Figure 5. From this figure it will be seen that two of the centers are in the lower part of the county (in the Anthony-LaTuna service area), three in the Las Cruces service area, and three in the Harch service area. They range in population from 42 persons in Leasburg to 452 in Doña Ana. Some are relatively close to larger centers while others are more isolated.

### LOCATION

Figure 5 shows that the villages and hamlets being studied lie at the edge of the community within which they are found. This is merely another way of stating that these centers are located on the mesas bordering the irrigated area in Doña Ana County. The community boundaries, except between the Las Cruces and the Anthony-LaTuna communities, are approximately the same as the boundaries of the irrigated area. Only one center—namely, Doña Ana—lies partly in the irrigated area.

The location of the centers on the mesas at the edge of the

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<sup>2</sup> The other two villages were not included for definite reasons. Tortugas is unique among the Spanish-American villages in the county because of its Indian element. Rincon was excluded because it is, in many respects, similar to the village of Doña Ana. Furthermore, the inclusion of such a large center would have necessitated a reduction in the number of centers studied because of time and cost limitations. In the opinion of the writer, however, the exclusion of Rincon has not materially affected the results of the study.

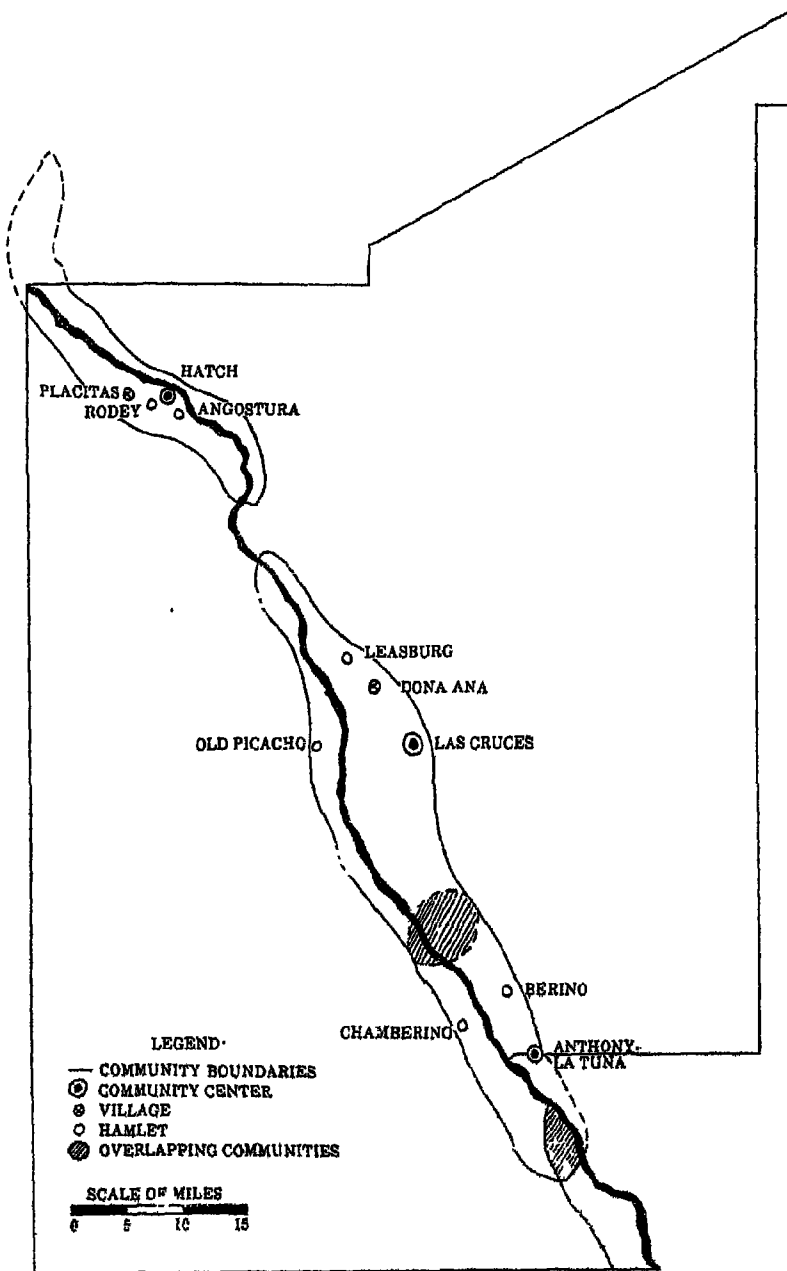


FIGURE 5  
Location of Eight Selected Villages and Hamlets

irrigated area is explained by the danger from floods at the time of settlement. Prior to the construction of the Elephant Butte Reservoir, in 1916, major floods could wreak havoc on any settlement located in the irrigated area. Several instances of such occurrences will be mentioned in the account of the historical background of the centers studied. Settlement on the mesas has had certain consequences growing out of the fact that it has not been possible to get irrigation water up to the level of the centers. Because of the lack of adequate rainfall, very little vegetation is found in the centers except a few desert plants. Very few trees are to be found, and flowers, lawns, and vegetable gardens are out of the question, except insofar as it might be possible to grow a few plants watered from the household wells. This absence of vegetation presents a rather desolate picture, especially since the dwellings are, in themselves, a somewhat dilapidated sight. In short, although settlement on the mesas made possible protection against the floods, it also has been partly responsible for the typical appearance of the hamlets and villages.

The location of the centers on the mesas is also of significance from the standpoint of isolation from the wider area. In some instances the main travelled highways in the county run at the edge of the irrigated area and pass near the villages and hamlets on the mesas. In other instances, however, these highways pass some distance from the centers and leave them relatively isolated. The factor of isolation will receive more detailed consideration in the following chapters, but should be mentioned here in connection with the location of some of the centers studied.

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In order better to set forth the nature of social organization in the selected villages and hamlets and the factors that relate to the social organization, it is necessary to give a brief account of the history of these centers. Each center will be considered separately, in chronological order from the oldest to the most recent.

*Doña Ana*

Brief reference was made in Chapter I to the first successful attempt at settlement in Doña Ana County at Doña Ana in 1843. Some reports state that the village was started some time prior to 1680. Even if this were the case, prior to 1843, Doña Ana was hardly more than a camping place on the Chihuahua Trail, which ran between Chihuahua and Santa Fe. Permanent settlement only goes back about a century. It appears that a group of settlers from Mexico came to Doña Ana in 1839, but it was not until 1843 that the settlers received their grant of land, which came to be known as the Doña Ana Bend Colony Grant. The village at that time became a Mexican colony, and permanent settlement was established. As such, Doña Ana has the oldest history of any place between what is now the northern border of Mexico and the Pueblo country in northern New Mexico.

Doña Ana continued to attract settlers and had become a well-established village by the time of the American occupation in 1846. In 1850 the village lost a considerable number of its inhabitants to the village of Mesilla, which was founded at that time. It continued, however, to occupy an important place in the life of the area, and although it never assumed the importance of Mesilla, it was for many years one of the most important villages in Doña Ana County. One of the reasons why it continued to be important was the fact that it was on the route to northern New Mexico. The only road to the north passed along the edge of the mesa to Doña Ana. With the erection of the Elephant Butte Reservoir, better roads were built in the valley and the village began to decline in importance. An improved road was built about one-half mile from the village paralleling the old road to the north. Here a number of economic agencies have sprung up and a few homes have been built adjacent to these agencies. Families have also built their homes along the road leading from the old village to the highway. Doña Ana is thus today a village consisting of the old settlement, the newer addition at the crossroad, and the families living along the road joining the old and new parts. It has had an old and colorful history, but today the old section

is no longer the scene of great activity. The majority of the households in Doña Ana reside in the old part, but what little economic activity there is in the village centers chiefly at the crossroad.

### *Old Picacho*

Unfortunately, historical data concerning the eight villages and hamlets are in most instances not as complete as for Doña Ana. Few written sources are available for tracing the history of the other centers. In most instances it has been necessary to trace the date of the origin by inference from related events and through interviews with persons still living.

Without much question the next oldest of the centers studied is Old Picacho. It was settled some time between 1850, the date of the founding of Mesilla, and 1857, when the first overland stage was put into operation.<sup>a</sup> Old Picacho was a station on this stage route and also a station on the Butterfield stage route started a year later. During the period the stagecoaches operated, there was a small inn at Old Picacho, where a limited amount of merchandise could be obtained. Later the center had other economic agencies, but these disappeared with the establishment of Fairacres, a hamlet on the transcontinental highway, two miles south of Old Picacho. Today there is nothing to indicate that it was once on a route of transcontinental travel.

### *Rodey*

The exact date of the origin of Rodey has not been determined, but various accounts, by long-time residents in Doña Ana County, would indicate that the center originated some time shortly after the Civil War. The oldest living inhabitants of the northern part of the county speak in awed terms of Rodey as being "very old." It is recognized as being considerably older than Rincon, a village about five miles away, which originated in 1881 as a junction point of the main line of the Santa Fe Railroad and a branch line to Deming to the west. Thus, it appears likely that Rodey was established at least by 1865.

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<sup>a</sup> See page 23.

There seems to be unanimity of opinion as to why Rodey was started. The general idea is that the center started as a haven for outlaws. Some accounts state that these outlaws came from Chihuahua, Mexico, but in all likelihood New Mexico contributed its share to this group. At any rate, the center had an unsavory reputation in its early days according to all reports—a reputation which still exists to a marked degree. Stories abound about the happenings in Rodey, both in the more distant past and during relatively recent times.

The rather sinister past history of Rodey is of some importance from the standpoint of a present-day study of the hamlet. Strangers today are not very welcome in the village. Rodey was by far the most difficult center in which to obtain information for this study. In general, the people were suspicious, more so than in the other centers studied. An outsider soon gets the impression that the inhabitants of Rodey would rather be left to their own devices. The people of the hamlet definitely constitute a well-defined "in-group."

The history of Rodey to a considerable degree has been tied up with the presence of two stores. The owners of these two stores possessed large flocks of sheep and goats, and one of them also owned a large number of cattle. In addition, raising and dealing in grain and hay were major activities of these two storekeepers. In their far-flung activities they furnished employment for the majority of the inhabitants of the center. Both stores and their owners have long since disappeared. Only the walls of the one store are to be seen today. With the disappearance of these major economic activities, the hamlet has greatly deteriorated. To many outsiders not familiar with Rodey, it appears deserted. Yet it is a center with nearly 250 inhabitants, and it persists in spite of the loss of former importance.

### *Placitas*

The village of Placitas was begun in 1878 according to the statement of the oldest inhabitant in the village. This was a few years before the building of the railroad through the valley. This same inhabitant stated that the village was begun



on the mesa in order to avoid the flood waters of the Rio Grande. Shortly after Placitas was started a large number of people moved there from an older settlement at Fort Santa Barbara, about five miles to the north.

Placitas originally was located a short distance from its present location. Because of overgrazing in the late 1800's and the early 1900's, the rainfall on the surrounding mesa was not absorbed and ran off very quickly, starting what are known as "flash" floods. These floods created arroyos, deep gulleys which, when full of water, wear away the surrounding soil very rapidly. There is such an arroyo next to the village of Placitas. The village was first located where the arroyo now runs. When erosion set in and the arroyo began to wear away the hillside on which Placitas was located, the village was moved to its present site, some time between 1900 and 1910. At present there are a number of families living on the other side of the arroyo, about a quarter of a mile from the main site of the village, but these families, from a sociological standpoint, constitute a part of the village proper.

### *Chamberino*

Next in age of the eight hamlets and villages is the hamlet known as Chamberino. This center originated in 1886 as a result of a large flood which completely destroyed a village by the same name in the Rio Grande Valley. The first Chamberino (or Old Chamberino as it is now called) was started some time prior to 1860. Before its destruction it was a thriving village with a reputed two hundred homes, four stores, two saloons with billiard tables, and a school in which the children were taught in Spanish. During the floods prior to 1886, the villagers would flee to the hills and after the waters receded return to repair the damage. After the flood of 1886, only a few houses remained standing and the village was never rebuilt. Many of the families residing in the village moved out to their farms in the valley and kept on fleeing from the floods that continued to come at intervals, though in a less severe degree. Some of the families helped found what is now called Chamberino.

*Berino*

For sixteen years after 1886 the floods in the lower part of Doña Ana County were not serious and did no great damage. In 1902, however, the river again went on a rampage. Another group of families, this time living on their farms in the valley, began to look for a place in which to live out of danger of the floods. Fourteen families selected three of the men to act as "commissioners" to secure title to some land on the mesa. The result was that they obtained forty acres of mesa land where the hamlet of Berino now is located. Before negotiations were completed the flood of 1902 had receded, and some of the families decided to return to their farms. Subsequent floods during the next two years forced them to the site they had chosen for protection against the floods.

The history of Berino is interesting in that the center saw an influx of immigrants from Mexico in 1910 and the years immediately following. These immigrants were fugitives from the revolutionary disturbance in Mexico. One old man in the center stated quite bluntly to the interviewer, "We didn't care to fight, and living conditions in Chihuahua during the revolution were bad; so we came up here to find a better life."

*Angostura*

This center is a small cluster of households which had its origin around 1899. Originally there was only one family there, but another family arrived shortly afterward. Some of the children of these families remained when they grew up and married. As time went on, other families moved in and either purchased or rented lands from the original settlers. Still later, agricultural laborers came. Angostura is especially interesting in that it is a hamlet in which practically all the households are connected with agriculture in some manner or other.

*Leasburg*

The small hamlet of Leasburg was started in 1910 by one family. There is near this center a railroad stop known as Leasburg Station, which was established long before 1910;

but this railroad point is no longer important and bears no relation to the cluster of families with which this study is concerned. These families have settled across the tracks away from the station stop because the one family originally settled there. Relatives and friends subsequently joined the settlement. Leasburg is the most recent of the eight hamlets and villages studied, having been in existence only about thirty years, a relatively short time in comparison to Doña Ana, which has existed for approximately a hundred years.

Attention can now be given to a description of the eight villages and hamlets and of the characteristics of their inhabitants at the present time.

### AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS

The number and kinds of agencies and institutions found in the eight selected hamlets and villages are important for an interpretation of the social organization of these centers. Considerable significance has been given to the presence of agencies and institutions in various types of locality groups by rural sociologists who have attempted to explain the functioning of these groups. In the next chapter the writer will attempt to show that the presence of different agencies and institutions in the Spanish-American villages and hamlets selected for study is not a major factor in explaining the social organization of these centers. At this point it will be sufficient briefly to enumerate the various agencies and institutions which are found today in the eight villages and hamlets.

One of the most outstanding characteristics of the centers is the absence of many of the agencies and institutions deemed essential to meet even minimum needs. Doña Ana, the largest of the centers,<sup>4</sup> has the largest number of agencies and institutions. There are two grocery stores, one general merchandise store, one blacksmith shop, a bar, a pool hall, a cotton gin, one school, and two churches. The rest of the centers are not so well supplied. Berino has one local grocery, a church, and a handball court. Chamberino has a general merchandise store, a school, and a church. Placitas has a local grocery, a pool hall,

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<sup>4</sup> See Table 3 for the population of the centers.

a church, and a handball court. Rodey has a local grocery, a bar, a school, and a church. Old Picacho has a pool hall and a handball court. Leasburg and Angostura have no agencies or institutions of any kind.

### STRUCTURE

There is no uniformity of structure to be noticed in the hamlets and villages studied. For the most part the centers are laid out into blocks with a few cross streets. These streets are merely sand roads that run through the centers. In some cases the houses are scattered at the edge of the hamlets and villages without regard to streets or roads. The hamlet of Rodey is the only one of the centers which has deviated from the general type of structure. It has a square, or plaza, in the center and the Catholic church is located on the plaza. On the whole the physical structure of the centers may be said to consist of a few streets with the houses built right up to the edge of the streets. The outstanding physical feature of the centers is the fact that in the most cases the houses are built so that they touch the next house. In other words, the whole side of a street within a block may consist of a solid line of dwellings. This, as will be shown later, is, in part, an outgrowth of family solidarity.

### POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Description and analysis of the characteristics of the population of the centers studied have been limited to those factors which were deemed most important and which help to interpret the social-cultural processes which determine the social organization of the centers. These factors include the number and size of households, age and sex distribution, marital status, type of household, and educational and occupational status.

#### *Number of Households*

Altogether there are 506 households and 1,423 persons in the eight selected villages and hamlets. The centers range in

size from 42 persons in Leasburg to 452 persons in Doña Ana. The average number of households in each center is slightly more than thirty-eight and there is an average of 178 persons in each center.

Data were not obtained for quite all of the households in the centers, primarily because of unwillingness of the heads of some households to give the desired information. Even so, it was possible to obtain data for 297 out of the 306 households, or for approximately 97 per cent of the total number. The distribution of the households included in this study, by the race or nationality of head, is shown for each center in Table 5. An examination of this table shows the predominance of Spanish-American households, 89.2 per cent falling in this category. Of the remainder, 8.4 per cent are Anglo-American, 2.4 per cent Negro and Japanese. The Negro households are all in Berino, and the Japanese household in Old Picacho. Three of the centers—Angostura, Chamberino, and Leasburg—consist of Spanish-Americans altogether. The centers with the largest proportion of Anglo-American households are the villages of Doña Ana and Placitas, with 12.9 and 15.7 per cent, respectively.

TABLE 5

NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS INCLUDED IN STUDY OF EIGHT  
SELECTED VILLAGES AND HAMLETS, BY CENTER AND BY RACE OR  
NATIONALITY OF HEAD, 1934\*

Center	Total		Spanish-American		Anglo-American		Other	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
All centers	297	100.0	265	89.2	25	8.4	7	2.4
Angostura	15	100.0	15	100.0	—	—	—	—
Berino	36	100.0	29	80.5	1	2.8	6†	16.7
Chamberino	20	100.0	20	100.0	—	—	—	—
Doña Ana	101	100.0	88	87.1	13	12.9	—	—
Leasburg	11	100.0	11	100.0	—	—	—	—
Old Picacho	19	100.0	18	94.7	—	—	1‡	5.3
Placitas	51	100.0	45	88.3	8	15.7	—	—
Rodey	44	100.0	41	93.2	3	6.8	—	—

\* There are 306 households in the eight centers but data could not be obtained for nine of them. These nine households consist of one family in Placitas, one in Berino, one in Doña Ana, one family and one single person in Leasburg, and three families and one single person in Rodey.

† Negro.

‡ Japanese.

The number of households studied in all the centers combined, by race or nationality, and sex of head, may be seen in Table 6. This table shows that a female member is the head in a considerable number of the Spanish-American households. Of the 265 households in this cultural group, 41, or 15.5 per cent, have a woman as head. The prominence of women in the Spanish-American culture is seen somewhat from these data. In many cases a woman is the head of the household because the household consists of a broken family with the husband absent as the result of death or marital discord (Table 10). Yet, in spite of the inclusion of broken families, the importance of female leadership must not be overlooked.

TABLE 6  
NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS INCLUDED IN STUDY OF EIGHT SELECTED VILLAGES  
AND HAMLETS, BY RACE OR NATIONALITY AND SEX OF HEAD, 1939

Race or nationality	Total	Male head	Female head
Total	297	254	43
Spanish-American	265	224	41
Anglo-American	25	23	2
Negro	6	6	—
Other *	1	1	—

\* Japanese.

Table 5 shows the distribution of the households by the race or nationality of the head. Comparable data for the persons included in these households are found in Table 7. A comparison of the data in the two tables indicates that the distribution of the persons in the households in the different racial or nationality groups is approximately the same as the distribution of the heads of households with respect to race or nationality. Thus, 89.8 per cent of all persons are Spanish-Americans, 9.2 per cent Anglo-Americans, and 1.0 per cent Negro and Japanese.

#### *Size of Household*

The average size of household for the total sample and in each center is shown in Table 8. According to this table, the average size of household for all the centers is 4.7 persons. There is some variation among the different centers but the

variation is not great. The small average size of households for Leasburg may be explained by the fact that there are only eleven households in this center.

With respect to the different racial or nationality groups, there is little difference in the average size of household. Both

TABLE 7

NUMBER AND DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS INCLUDED IN STUDY OF EIGHT  
SELECTED VILLAGES AND HAMLETS, BY RACE OR NATIONALITY, 1939\*

Center	Total		Spanish-American		Anglo-American		Other	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
All centers	1390	100.0	1243	89.3	118	9.2	24	1.0
Angostura	69	100.0	69	100.0	—	—	—	—
Berino	147	100.0	122	83.0	4	2.7	21†	14.3
Chamberino	102	100.0	102	100.0	—	—	—	—
Doña Ana	447	100.0	396	88.6	51	11.4	—	—
Leasburg	38	100.0	38	100.0	—	—	—	—
Old Picacho	102	100.0	99	97.1	—	—	3‡	2.9
Placitas	258	100.0	210	81.4	48	18.6	—	—
Rodey	227	100.0	212	93.4	15	6.6	—	—

\* The total number of persons shown in this table for some centers is slightly less than the total number of persons in the centers. This is due to the fact that data could not be obtained for all the households in some centers. Altogether there were thirty-three persons for whom data were not obtained. Five of these live in Placitas, five in Berino, five in Doña Ana, four in Leasburg, and fourteen in Rodey.

† Negro.

‡ Japanese.

TABLE 8

AVERAGE SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD IN EIGHT SELECTED VILLAGES  
AND HAMLETS, BY CENTER, 1939

Center	Number of households	Number of persons	Average size of household
All centers	297	1390	4.7
Angostura	15	69	4.6
Berino	36	147	4.1
Chamberino	20	102	5.1
Doña Ana	101	447	4.4
Leasburg	11	38	3.5
Old Picacho	19	102	5.4
Placitas	52	258	5.2
Rodey	44	227	5.2

the Spanish-American and the Anglo-American households average 4.7 persons. There are on the average 3.6 persons in each of the six Negro households. The one Japanese household consists of three persons.

### *Age and Sex Distribution*

The heads of the Spanish-American households are, on the average, a little younger than the heads of the Anglo-American households. The average age of all household heads is 46.5 years, of the Spanish-American heads, 46.1 years, and of the Anglo-American, 50.1 years. The older average age of the Anglo-American heads may be due in part to the smaller proportion of the total in the group, but the difference in age is largely explained by the fact that these families are for the most part of a very low economic status and may be assumed to have moved to these Spanish-American centers after having failed at endeavors elsewhere. Most of the Anglo-American families have resided in the centers a shorter period of time than the Spanish-American families.

The age and sex distribution of the total population in the selected villages and hamlets is shown in Figure 6. A comparison of Figure 6 with Figure 2, which gives a graphic picture of the age and sex distribution of the total population in Doña Ana County in 1930, shows considerable similarity between the two distributions. Some of the discrepancies between the two distributions is due to the relatively small number of persons included in this study.

The number of males per one hundred females in the centers corresponds closely to that of the total rural-nonfarm population of Doña Ana County in 1930. Table 9 gives the number of males per one hundred females in each center. The sex ratio for all centers is 106.8, while for the rural-nonfarm population of Doña Ana County in 1930 it was 105.1. The variation in the ratio between the various centers is not as great as might have been expected in view of the relatively small number of persons in some of the centers. The only extreme variations are Berino with a sex ratio of 122.7 and Chamberino with a sex ratio of 88.9



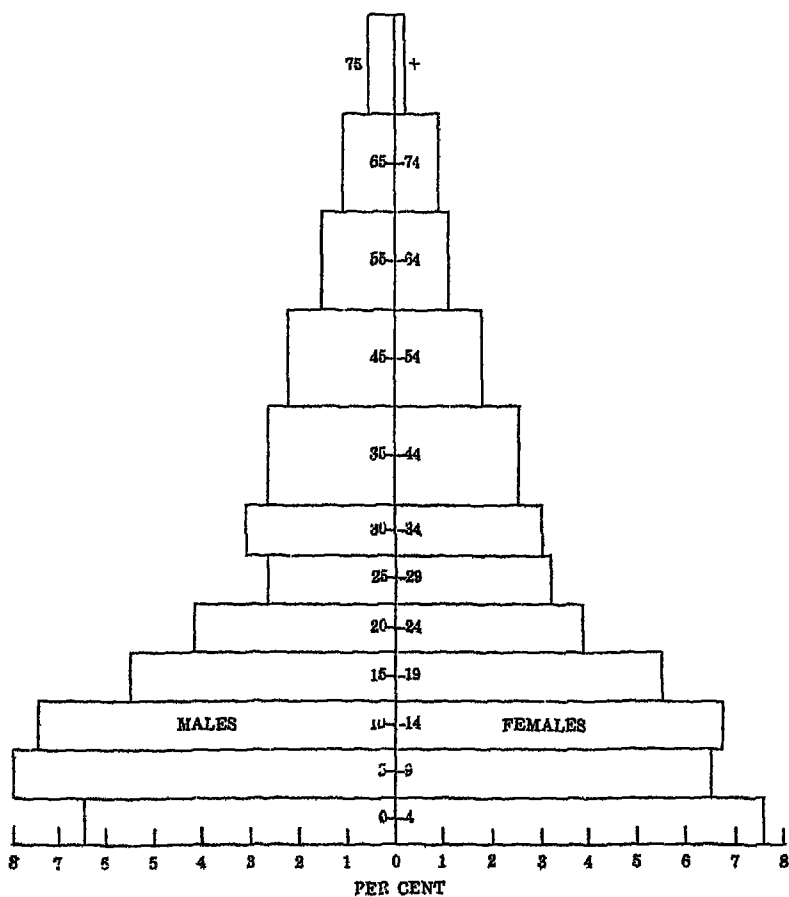


FIGURE 6  
 Age and Sex Distribution of the Population of Eight  
 Selected Villages and Hamlets, 1939

TABLE 9  
MALES PER ONE HUNDRED FEMALES IN EIGHT SELECTED VILLAGES  
AND HAMLETS, BY CENTER, 1939

Center	Males	Females	Males per 100 females
All centers	718	672	106.8
Angostura	35	34	102.9
Berino	81	66	122.7
Chamberino	48	54	88.9
Dona Ana	232	215	107.9
Lessburg	20	18	111.1
Old Picacho	53	49	108.2
Placitas	134	124	108.1
Rodey	115	112	102.7

### *Marital Status*

The marital status of the heads of the households included in the study is shown in Table 10. There are eleven heads, or 3.7 per cent, who are single persons. More important is the high proportion of widowed heads. The explanation for this condition is partly found when the group is broken down by sex. More than four-fifths of the female heads are widows, while only 8.7 per cent of the male heads are widowers. It is to be expected that the proportion of widowed heads in the female group would be high, since the wife of the male head in the majority of the cases assumes the headship upon the death of her husband. All in all, the 19.2 per cent of widowed heads, both males and females, does not indicate a marked tendency to remarry. Very few of the heads are divorced or separated.

TABLE 10  
MARITAL STATUS OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT SELECTED VILLAGES  
AND HAMLETS, BY SEX OF HEAD, 1939

Marital status	Total		Males		Females	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total	297	100.0	254	100.0	43	100.0
Single	11	3.7	9	5.5	2	4.7
Married	225	75.8	221	87.0	4	9.3
Widowed	57	19.2	22	8.7	35	81.4
Divorced	1	0.3	—	—	1	2.3
Separated	3	1.0	2	0.8	1	2.3

A common belief is that Spanish-Americans tend to marry more than do Anglo-Americans. Data obtained in this study do not bear out this assumption. Table 11 gives the marital status of the population fifteen years of age and over in the centers studied for each sex. The percentage distributions shown in this table are very similar to those which characterize the population of the same age group for New Mexico as a whole.<sup>5</sup> The marital status of the New Mexico population in turn is very similar to that for the United States.<sup>6</sup> However, while the Spanish-Americans, on the basis of data obtained, do not marry more than do the Anglo-Americans, there is some evidence that they marry earlier.

TABLE 11  
MARITAL STATUS OF POPULATION FIFTEEN YEARS OF AGE AND OVER IN EIGHT  
SELECTED VILLAGES AND HAMLETS, BY SEX, 1939

Marital status	Total		Males		Females	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total	803	100.0	413	100.0	390	100.0
Single	245	30.5	143	34.6	102	26.2
Married	468	58.3	233	56.4	235	60.2
Widowed	74	9.2	30	7.3	44	11.3
Divorced	3	0.4	1	0.2	2	0.5
Separated	13	1.6	6	1.5	7	1.8

Related to marital status and to the problems of this study is the type of households. Mobility, family solidarity, educational problems, economic security, and other factors are affected by the type of household. Data on the type of households in the eight selected villages and hamlets are presented in Table 12. Nearly 10 per cent of all the households consist of only one person, and slightly over 10 per cent consist of husband and wife. The most common type of household is the one consisting of husband, wife, and children under sixteen years of age, slightly more than one third of all the households coming in this category. This group will, in all likelihood, tend to be less mobile than some of the other types of households. The presence of children will center interests more in the fam-

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Fifteenth Census of the United States, *Population Bulletin*, Second Series, New Mexico, p. 11.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Fifteenth Census of the United States, *Population*, Vol. III, Part I, p. 11.

ily as a group. Problems of education will be of greater concern to the group than to the other type of households. Economic security will be more of a problem because of the absence of productive workers other than the head. Somewhat the same problems face the group of households with children both under and over sixteen years of age, 12.1 per cent of the total, but these problems are less important because of the presence of children sixteen years of age and over. These children have reached the age when productive labor is possible, when school attendance drops off, and when movement away from the home and from the center is more likely. The influence of the last of these three factors is seen in the small proportion of households, 4.4 per cent, consisting of husband, wife, and children sixteen years of age and over.

Slightly over one-eighth of all the households are made up of parents, children, and other relatives, and in a few cases of unrelated persons. The presence of this type of household in a proportion as large as exists is an indication of family solidarity. On the other hand, nearly as large a proportion, 12.8 per cent, of the households consist of broken families. This

TABLE 12  
TYPES OF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT SELECTED VILLAGES AND HAMLETS,  
BY RACE OR NATIONALITY OF HEAD, 1939

Type of household	Total Number	Per cent	Spanish- American	Anglo- American	Other
Total	297	100.0	265	25	7†
Single person *	27	9.1	26	1	—
Husband and wife	35	11.8	26	7	2
Husband, wife, and children under 16	106	35.7	95	8	3
Husband, wife, and children 16 and over	13	4.4	12	1	—
Husband, wife, and children under and over 16	36	12.1	29	7	—
Augmented family †	42	14.1	42	—	—
Broken family	38	12.8	35	1	2

\* A single person here is one person living alone regardless of marital status.

† An augmented family consists of a biological family and other relatives, and in a few instances unrelated persons.

‡ All of these are Negro households except one Japanese broken family.

group faces special problems of economic security since most of them consist of families where the father is missing.

### *Educational Status*

Table 13 shows the educational status of the household heads by the sex of the head. A glance at this table immediately indicates the low education of the household heads, especially of the female heads. Of the male heads, 22.8 per cent have received no schooling, but of the female heads, 41.9 per cent, or nearly twice as great a proportion, have received no schooling. Approximately one-third of both the male and the female heads have been in school from one to four years. About the same proportion of male heads have been in school from five to eight years but only slightly more than one-eighth of the female heads have attended school this much. Only fifteen out of the 254 male heads have attended high school and six of these are Anglo-Americans. The one female head having attended high school is also Anglo-American. Thus, only eight of the 265 Spanish-American heads, or 3.0 per cent, have attended school beyond the eighth grade, and these only in high school. In general, the educational status of the Anglo-American heads is higher than that of the Spanish-American heads.

The wives of the male household heads have a higher educational status than do either the male or the female heads. Only slightly more than one-tenth have had no schooling at all,

TABLE 13  
EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT SELECTED VILLAGES  
AND HAMLETS, BY RACE OR NATIONALITY AND SEX OF HEAD, 1939

Grade completed	Male		Total Female		Spanish-American		Anglo-American		Other	
	No.	%	No.	%	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total	254	100.0	43	100.0	224	41	23	2	7	—
0	58	22.8	18	41.9	56	18	—	—	2	—
1-4	84	33.1	15	34.9	80	15	3	—	1	—
5-8	78	30.7	6	13.9	63	5	11	1	2*	—
9-12	15	5.9	2	4.7	13	—	6	2	1	—
13 and over	2	0.8	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
Unknown	17	6.7	3	7.0	15	3	1	—	1	—

\* One Negro and one Japanese. All the rest in this category are Negroes.

while nearly two-fifths have attended school from five to eight years and one-tenth have attended high school. The Spanish-American wives who have attended high school constitute 6.2 per cent of all the Spanish-American wives, while the Anglo-American wives with the same educational status constitute 30.4 per cent of all the Anglo-American wives. On the whole the educational status of the Anglo American wives is higher than that of the Spanish-American wives

Educational attainment on the part of the children under sixteen years of age, regardless of sex and race or nationality, is shown in Table 14. The last column in this table shows the average grade completed by children of specified ages. Judged by the standard that a child of seven should have completed the first grade, a child of eight the second grade, and so on, the educational attainment of the children is low in the centers studied. In other words, there is evidence of educational retardation. The degree of retardation tends to increase as the age increases. Thus, the average grade completed is only 6.3 for the children fifteen years of age.

The preceding discussion of the educational status of the Spanish-Americans in the eight villages and hamlets has indicated that only a few members of this cultural group have attended or are attending high school. This is a manifestation

TABLE 14  
GRADES COMPLETED BY CHILDREN UNDER SIXTEEN IN EIGHT SELECTED  
VILLAGES AND HAMLETS, BY AGE, 1939

Age	Number of children	Grades completed										Average grade completed
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Total	380	43	51	59	62	57	36	36	16	16	4	3.3
6	41	33	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.2
7	31	8	18	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.9
8	46	2	14	25	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	1.7
9	32	—	5	11	13	2	1	—	—	—	—	2.5
10	43	—	2	7	15	14	5	—	—	—	—	3.3
11	34	—	2	3	9	14	4	2	—	—	—	3.6
12	44	—	1	2	7	12	11	10	—	1	—	4.5
13	47	—	1	4	25	6	6	18	4	3	—	5.1
14	25	—	—	2	4	4	4	3	5	3	—	5.2
15	37	—	—	—	4	5	5	3	7	9	4	6.3

of the situation characteristic for Doña Ana County as a whole. The proportion of Spanish-Americans in the county, according to estimates based on the school census, is nearly two-thirds of the total population. Enrollment of Spanish-American children in the elementary schools in recent years has been in approximately the same proportion to the total elementary school population. On the other hand, only about one-fourth of the high school enrollment over the same period has consisted of Spanish-Americans. In other words, Spanish-American children do not continue in high school to the same extent that do Anglo-American children. This is particularly true with respect to the Spanish-American children from the open-country areas and from the small villages and hamlets.

The data indicating a low educational status on the part of the people in the villages and hamlets studied are substantiated by data on illiteracy for Doña Ana County as a whole. In 1930 the proportion of illiterates ten years old and over in the total population was exceeded in only six of the thirty-one counties in the State. Of these six counties, five were the counties with the largest proportion of Indians. In Doña Ana County, the percentage of illiterates ten years old and over was 16.5 for the total population, 7.4 for the urban population (Las Cruces), 18.8 for the rural-farm population, and 19.3 for the rural-non-farm population.<sup>7</sup>

### *Occupational Status*

This study is concerned with the nature of social organization in selected Spanish-American villages and hamlets and of the social-cultural processes determining such social organization. An important matter in this connection is the occupational status of the households in these centers, since the type of social organization which exists and the nature of the processes involved will depend on the type of work in which these people engage. Table 15 presents the occupational distribution of the heads of the households.

The importance of agricultural activity for the household heads is at once made evident by Table 15. Over half of all

<sup>7</sup> Data obtained from the Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, *Population Bulletin*, Second Series, New Mexico, pp. 17-21.

TABLE 15

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT SELECTED VILLAGES AND HAMLETS, BY RACE OR NATIONALITY OF HEAD, 1939

Occupation	Total		Spanish-American	Anglo-American	Other
	Number	Per cent			
Total	297	100.0	265	25	7
Farm owner	29	9.8	26	3	—
Farm tenant	19	6.4	17	2	—
Farm laborer	112	37.7	100	6	6*
Common laborer	65	21.9	62	3	—
Other	23	7.7	15	8	—
No occupation	49	16.5	45	3	1†

\* Negroes.

† Japanese.

heads are on some step of the agricultural ladder. One-sixth of the heads have no occupation. This last point calls for some explanation. The heads in this group are mainly female heads, and the rest are male heads too old to work. In a large proportion of these cases direct relief is obtained. When the forty-nine heads with no occupation are subtracted from the total number of heads, it is found that of the remaining 248, the 160, or 64.5 per cent, are connected with agriculture.

The importance of the data on the proportion of all the heads associated with farming at some level must be stressed. Of the 57.9 per cent of the heads in this group, only 9.8 per cent are farm owners and only 6.4 per cent are farm tenants, while all the rest are farm laborers. This is especially important in view of the fact that at one time many of the inhabitants of the centers owned a small piece of land which they farmed. Furthermore, the large proportion of common laborers is a relatively recent development. This group finds work mostly in Las Cruces, Hatch, and Anthony, or on WPA projects. In short, agricultural labor and common labor, and to a limited extent farm tenancy, have supplanted farm ownership. This change has affected the economic security of the inhabitants of the centers, and the loss of farm ownership has tended to make for the concentration of former farm owners in the villages and hamlets.



## HOUSING FACILITIES

The habits of people and the attitudes they take toward some of the problems which confront them are conditioned by the way in which they live. Toward this end brief reference will be made below to the type and size of dwelling, the type of household tenure, heating facilities, lighting facilities, sanitary facilities, and refrigeration.

*Type and Size of Dwelling*

The one outstanding characteristic of the type of dwellings in which the people live is the preponderance of adobe structures. This type of structure is quite definitely an adaptation to the geographical environment. There is no timber in the area except a few cottonwood trees along the Rio Grande, and the early settlers found it necessary to utilize some other material than wood for their dwellings. The result has been the utilization of a heavy clay which is found in most parts of the valley. This clay is used in various ways to construct dwellings, but the most common practice has been and still is to make adobe bricks out of the clay. These bricks are approximately nine inches wide, twelve inches long, and three or four inches thick. They are made by mixing the clay with straw and water, the straw being used for the purpose of binding the clay together. When the mixture is prepared it is poured into molds, and the bricks that are formed are then dried in the sun. In this manner a material for the construction of dwellings is obtained without much direct cash outlay. The main item involved is labor. As a consequence adobe dwellings can be constructed at a low cost, a factor essential to the majority of the Spanish-Americans in the area. Once the bricks have been made or acquired, the construction of a dwelling is a relatively simple matter. The typical dwelling is a flat-roofed, one-story structure with few rooms and a minimum number of doors and windows to simplify construction and keep down costs. There are some variations in the type of adobe structures built, but the majority of the adobe dwellings are of the type that has been described. For the most part the structures have dirt floors.

Of the 297 households included in this study, 275, or 92.6 per cent, live in adobe structures without any outside finish, and 16, or 5.4 per cent, live in adobe dwellings with a stucco finish. Thus, 98 per cent of the households live in adobe structures. Of the remaining six households, five live in wood houses, and one lives in a house made of cement. The dwellings are very small in relation to the number of persons that reside in them. Two-fifths of the dwellings are two room structures and slightly over one-tenth of the structures have only one room. There is an average of 2.8 rooms per dwelling, while the average size of household is 4.7 persons (Table 8). Such a crowded condition gives some conception of the mode of living of these people.

### *Type of Household Tenure*

Nearly two-thirds of the dwellings are owned by the head of the household. Slightly over one-fifth are rented. The remainder live in houses which they use in return for care and upkeep, which they obtain in payment for some service, which are lent to them, or which are owned by some relative.

The large proportion of the houses owned by the head of the household calls for some explanation. Two types of ownership prevail. In one instance the household owns both the house and the land on which it is built. In this category are found largely the older settlers in the centers. They have either purchased the land and built a house on it, or both the land and the house have been acquired through inheritance, usually from the parents of either the head or the wife of the head. The other type of ownership is that in which the people of the household claim ownership to the house but not to the land on which it is built. Such an arrangement may seem strange to one not acquainted with the customs of the Spanish-Americans; but to them it is quite a reasonable arrangement, and upon examination it is found to be so. The houses are built upon the family lot. The head of the larger family group retains ownership of the land but the houses built by other members of the family are the property of these members. In a number of instances this arrangement was stressed by the persons inter-

viewed. Such a system grows out of the family solidarity which prevails among the Spanish-Americans. In turn it explains why the dwellings in many instances are grouped closely together. Since a lot has only limited size, the construction of additional dwellings necessitates crowding of the dwellings.

### *Heating Facilities*

More than five out of every six households use kitchen stoves for heating. The fuel for their purpose is primarily wood, obtained by gathering mesquite roots and branches on the mesas, and by picking up scrap lumber whenever possible. Ten per cent of the households use oil for heating. The remainder have coal stoves or a fireplace. However, quantitative data on heating facilities do not give a complete picture. The fact is that among most Spanish-Americans the heating facilities are used mainly for cooking, even though the climate during the winter does necessitate some heat for comfort. The economic status of this cultural group in the majority of instances does not permit any expenditure for fuel except for the purpose of cooking and in many cases does not permit it even for this purpose.

### *Lighting Facilities*

Over five-sixths of the households use kerosene lamps for lighting and one-eighth use electricity. One household uses a gasoline lamp. Of the thirty-seven households using electricity, twenty-six are in the village of Doña Ana. The other eleven households are distributed among four centers. Three centers have no electric facilities at all, although such facilities could be obtained from transmission lines running past these centers. Again the explanation is found in the low economic status of the inhabitants.

### *Sanitary Facilities*

Nearly 95 per cent of the households have outdoor toilets while 4 per cent have no facilities of any sort. The condition of sanitation in the centers presents a serious problem. What facilities do exist are very primitive structures and located in such a manner that the health of the inhabitants suffers through contamination of the water supply and of the food.

*Type of Water Supply*

Of the 297 households, 50.5 per cent get their water supply from hand pumps, 14.5 per cent from open wells, 10.1 per cent from their neighbors, and 18.9 per cent from springs. The remainder get it by various means. The households getting their water from springs all reside in Berino and Rodey. This water has to be bought, and two prices prevail, one price if the water is delivered and another if the households get it themselves.

*Refrigeration*

There are practically no households with refrigeration facilities in the eight hamlets and villages. Only eight households altogether have such facilities, which include three ice and five electric refrigerators. These households, with one exception, are those which have a store or a bar.

## TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION

The means of transportation used by the households studied are shown in Table 16. The most outstanding fact revealed by the data presented in this table is the large proportion of the households which have no means of transportation. Nearly half of the households are in this group. Here again it is a matter of inability to afford such luxury. It is true that some of the households would have no great use for transportation facilities, but a desire to have them nevertheless prevails. As it is, slightly over one-third of the households have automobiles of their own, usually rather dilapidated vehicles. A few own trucks and a few have arrangements either to rent cars from their neighbors or to use the car of some relative. Altogether the means of transportation may be regarded as quite limited among the households in the centers.

Communication facilities are even more limited than transportation facilities. Only one center, Doña Ana, has telephone facilities, and the three households in this center that do have such facilities are engaged in some business enterprise. Forty-three of the 297 households have radios. Of these, twenty-five

TABLE 16  
MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION USED BY HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT SELECTED  
VILLAGES AND HAMLETS, 1939

Means of transportation	Number	Per cent
Total	297	100.0
Automobile	104	35.0
Truck	12	4.0
Rent car	11	3.7
Horse	13	4.4
Wagon	7	2.4
Relative's car	4	1.3
None	146	49.2

are in Doña Ana. Publications are subscribed to or bought by only a few of the households. Nine Spanish-American and nine Anglo-American households have a daily newspaper. Ten of the Spanish-American households subscribe to a weekly newspaper. Eight Spanish-American households subscribe to a magazine and five Anglo-American families subscribe to one or more magazines. Thus, only twenty-seven, or 10.2 per cent, of the Spanish-American households receive some publication, as compared to fourteen, or 56.0 per cent of the Anglo-American households. Most of the households in the villages and hamlets studied receive their mail by going to a post office, although a few of the families in Doña Ana receive their mail on a rural free delivery route. The majority of the Doña Ana residents receive their mail at the village post office. In Angostura, Placitas, and Rodey, the inhabitants get their mail in Hatch. The residents of Berino and Chamberino call for their mail at post offices in stores located on highways about a mile from each center. Postal facilities for Old Picacho are located at Fairacres, and the residents of Leasburg get their mail at a store on the highway about half a mile away, where it is left by the rural mail carrier.

### SERVICES

Reference has been made in a previous section to the scarcity of institutions and agencies in most of the centers in-

cluded in this study. The question therefore arises as to where the inhabitants of the centers go for various services which may not be available in the centers. Before an attempt is made to answer this question, it is necessary to call attention to the fact that the demands of the inhabitants are quite limited from the standpoint of services. There are, of course, the church and the school to be considered. The remaining services, other than any that might center around recreational activity, are restricted mainly to medical services, clothing, groceries, gasoline and oil, and auto repair. Legal services are seldom required by any of the people. The economic status of the group eliminates the need for banking services. Yet, in spite of the limited requirements, it is found that the centers do not meet the needs of their inhabitants.

The children of Angostura and Rodey attend the elementary school located at Rodey, and those of Placitas attend the Hatch municipal elementary school. The Hatch High School draws what few high school children there are in these three centers. The Catholic church at Rodey serves the inhabitants of both Rodey and Angostura and in some measure also the inhabitants of Placitas, since there is only a Catholic chapel at that place. Hatch is the service center for all the economic needs of the inhabitants of Angostura, and primarily so for those of Rodey and Placitas. In each of these two centers, however, there is a small grocery store which supplies part of the groceries for some of the households in these centers. Most of the groceries in both centers are obtained in Hatch. This village also provides medical facilities for the inhabitants of the three centers.

Doña Ana has a large elementary school which is attended by the children of the village. Children attending high school go to Las Cruces. The Catholic and Spanish Methodist churches in Doña Ana serve practically all of the households which have any religious affiliations, except for a few Anglo-American families that attend church in Las Cruces. Medical services and clothing are in almost all instances obtained in Las Cruces. The majority of the households buy their groceries in Doña Ana and most of the remaining households obtain this item in Las Cruces. Four-fifths of the owners of automobiles

buy their gas and oil in Doña Ana, but nearly all have their auto repair work done in Las Cruces.

The few children of school age in Leasburg attend school at Hill. People attending church go either to Doña Ana or Las Cruces or both. Medical services and clothing are in all instances obtained in Las Cruces. Half of the households purchase their groceries in Las Cruces, while the other half obtain them at an open-country store on the highway about half a mile from the center.

There is no grade school at Old Picacho; instead, the children attend the school at Fairacres, some two miles distant. There are no high school students at present in Old Picacho but the center is in the Las Cruces Union High School area. Most of the inhabitants attend church at the Catholic church in Las Cruces, although a few families do go to Mesilla. Medical facilities and all economic services are obtained in Las Cruces. A few families buy their groceries in Fairacres.

The Spanish-American children in Berino attend an elementary school located on the highway about a mile from the center. The Negro children attend school at Vado. There are no children from Berino attending high school at present, but the center is in the service area of the Valley High School located west of Anthony. The Spanish-Americans attend the Catholic church in Berino and the Negro families attend church at Vado. Anthony provides medical facilities. With respect to clothing and groceries, Berino differs from the other centers in that the households in this center are served by several other centers as well as by the grocery store in Berino. The local grocery serves about one-third of the families entirely, but the rest either buy part or all of their groceries at other centers, particularly La Mesa and Vado. Both of these centers are located a considerable distance away but send a truck to Berino to take orders to be delivered later. Clothing is bought at various neighboring centers, especially at La Mesa, and in the city of El Paso. Gas and oil are obtained at the highway.

At Chamberino there is an elementary school and also a Catholic church, which serve the population. Chamberino is in the Valley High School area. Medical services are obtained both at Anthony and in El Paso. Clothing is bought almost

entirely in El Paso. Most of the families buy their groceries in Chamberino, but some also purchase groceries in Anthony and El Paso. Gas and oil are purchased both in Chamberino and Anthony. The influence of the proximity to El Paso is noticeable with respect to the services used by the inhabitants of Chamberino. The same is true to a lesser degree in Berino. These two centers, located in the southern part of the country, are quite definitely within the El Paso trade area.

### SOCIABILITY AND RECREATION

There are no social organizations in the population centers studied. Recreational and sociability activities take place outside any organizational framework. The most important activities are visiting, dancing, and attending motion pictures. Of the 297 households, 249, or five out of six, reported that their members go visiting. Because of the importance of this aspect of sociability it will be discussed more in detail in the following paragraph. Next in importance is dancing. One hundred and two households, nearly one-third of the total, have a member or members who go to dances. The dances attended are held in the centers where the participants live in neighboring centers. This type of recreation is recognized as playing an important part in the interests of the Spanish-Americans and this view is substantiated by information obtained in this study. Seventy-eight households reported a member or members attending motion pictures. Movie-goers from Rodey, Angostura, and Placitas go to Hatch; those from Leasburg, Doña Ana, and Old Picacho go to Las Cruces; and those from Berino and Chamberino go to Anthony. Other activities engaged in are athletics, parties, and pool or billiards, although only fourteen, twelve, and nine households, respectively, reported a member or members participating in these activities.

The visiting done by the households which reported such activity is mostly with other households in a given center. Of the 249 households reporting that they go visiting, 147, or three out of five, visit only in their own hamlet or village. Of the remainder, thirty-seven visit in one or more centers besides



the one in which they reside. The rest visit in from one to three centers outside their own. In practically all cases the visiting outside a village or hamlet was done in nearby centers. While quantitative data were not obtained as to the reason for visiting, information gained during the interviews suggests that visiting in other centers, to a large degree, is with relatives or former residents.

## MOBILITY

Preceding sections of this chapter have shown that the eight hamlets and villages which are included in this study are largely inhabited by Spanish-Americans of low economic status. This low economic status is reflected in the manner in which they are forced to live. Inadequate housing and lack of household conveniences are the rule. Transportation and communication facilities are at a minimum. Institutional, medical, and economic services are few in most of the centers and those available in other centers are utilized only to a limited degree. Such a situation raises the question as to whether the population of the centers is stable enough to warrant better conditions. It is a well-known fact that localities with a highly mobile population suffer from both a social and an economic standpoint. If there is considerable population movement in and out of the centers studied, then perhaps this might be a partial explanation of prevailing conditions. Some measure of the stability of the population must therefore be obtained.

### *Length of Residence in Centers*

One way of getting at the amount of stability of the population with respect to movement can be obtained by noting the number of years which the heads of the households have resided in the centers. The heads whose years of residence are known have resided in the center in which they live on an average of 28.8 years. Approximately one-sixth have lived in the centers less than five years but nearly as large a proportion have lived there fifty years or more. However, in order to get an accurate picture of the number of years the heads have lived

in the villages and hamlets, it is necessary to consider the racial or nationality groups separately. The Spanish-American heads have had a longer period of residence than the Anglo-American heads, the average being 31.3 and 8.5 years, respectively. Even this relatively low average for the Anglo-American heads is higher than warranted, because the Anglo-American heads include one widow who was born in one of the centers and has lived there for sixty-nine years. When this individual is excluded the average length of residence for the Anglo-American heads is 5.8 years. Two-thirds of the Anglo-American heads and all of the Negro heads have lived in the centers less than five years.

It thus appears that, judged by the average length of residence, the Spanish-American household heads have tended to stay in the centers instead of moving away, since the age distribution of the total population in the centers is quite normal.

### *Place of Birth*

Another measure of the mobility of the population of the centers in question is to ascertain the place of birth. This information for the heads of the households may be found in Table 17. The data in this table give further evidence of the lack of mobility of the population in that a large proportion of the heads were born in the center of their present residence. There is, however, a considerable difference between the Spanish-American and the Anglo-American heads in this respect. Of the former, 43.4 per cent reported birth in their present residence, while only one of the latter so reported. Furthermore, 18.8 per cent of the Spanish American heads, but none of the Anglo-American, were born in some other center in Doña Ana County than the one where they now reside. Thus, 62.2 per cent of the Spanish-American heads were born in Doña Ana County. Only 5.7 per cent of the heads of this cultural group were born in some other county in New Mexico and 5.7 per cent in states other than New Mexico. On the other hand, 92.0 per cent of the Anglo-American heads and all of the Negro heads were born in other states. Of the Spanish-American heads, sixty-nine, or 26.0 per

TABLE 17

PLACE OF BIRTH OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT SELECTED VILLAGES  
AND HAMLETS, BY RACE OR NATIONALITY, 1939

Place of birth	Total		Spanish-American		Anglo-American		Other	
	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent
Total	297	100.0	265	100.0	25	100.0	7†	100.0
Present residence	116	39.1	115	43.4	1	4.0	—	—
Dofia Ana County outside present residence	50	16.8	50	18.8	—	—	—	—
New Mexico outside Dofia Ana County	15	5.1	15	5.7	—	—	—	—
Other states	44	14.8	15	5.7	23	92.0	6	85.7
Foreign countries	1	23.9	69*	26.0	1	4.0	1	14.3
Unknown	1	0.3	1	0.4	—	—	—	—

\* All born in Mexico.

† Six Negroes born in other states and one person born in Japan.

cent were born in Mexico. From these data it will be seen that the majority of the Spanish-American heads have always lived in the center in which they now reside or have come from relatively short distances from within the county, while the majority of the Anglo-American heads have come from other states. Thus, it cannot be said that the Spanish-American heads have been characterized by any great degree of mobility.

For comparative purposes it is of interest to note the place of birth of all the residents of the centers studied (Table 18). As would be expected, the proportion of all residents born in the place of their present residence is considerably greater than the proportion of household heads reporting such a place of birth, since the children of the households would be more likely to be born in the place of residence than would the heads of households. Thus, it was found that 64.1 per cent of all the Spanish-American residents were born at their present residence as compared with 43.4 per cent of the heads in the same cultural group. A smaller proportion of all the Spanish-American residents were born elsewhere in Doña Ana County. Naturally, the proportion of all the Spanish-American residents born outside the United States—that is, in Mexico—was much smaller

TABLE 18

PLACE OF BIRTH OF ALL RESIDENTS IN EIGHT SELECTED VILLAGES AND  
HAMLETS, BY RACE OR NATIONALITY, 1939

Place of birth	Total		Spanish-American		Anglo-American		Other	
	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent
Total	1390	100.0	1218	100.0	118	100.0	24*	100.0
Present residence	811	58.3	800	64.1	9	7.6	2	8.3
Dofia Ana County outside present residence	191	13.7	186	14.9	2	1.7	3	12.5
New Mexico outside Dofia Ana County	80	5.8	67	5.4	13	11.0	—	—
Other states	188	13.5	79	6.3	97	77.1	18	75.0
Foreign countries	115	8.3	111	8.9	3	2.6	1	4.2
Unknown	5	0.4	5	0.4	—	—	—	—

\* All of these are Negroes except two Japanese born in Dofia Ana County outside present residence and one Japanese born in Japan.

than the proportion of the Spanish-American heads, the percentages being 8.9 and 26.0, respectively.

There is a considerable variation as to the place of birth of all the residents for the different centers. In general, the proportion born in the place of residence is greatest for the oldest centers. Thus, in Dofia Ana, 70.5 per cent of all residents and 77.5 per cent of all Spanish-American residents were born in Dofia Ana. On the other hand, in Leasburg only 15.8 per cent of the residents (all Spanish-Americans) were born in Leasburg. This small percentage is obtained by the fact that this center has existed only three decades.

The conclusion regarding the data on the place of birth is that for the Spanish-American group, both the heads of households and all the residents, there is a marked tendency to continue residence at the place of birth. This is further evidence of the lack of any great degree of mobility on the part of the members of this cultural group.

#### *Last Previous Residence of Head*

Some indication of the extent or distance of the mobility of the heads of the households may be obtained by noting the last

TABLE 19

LAST PREVIOUS RESIDENCE OF HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT SELECTED  
VILLAGES AND HAMLETS, BY RACE OR NATIONALITY, 1939

Last previous residence	Total		Spanish- American		Anglo- American		Other	
	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent	Num- ber	Per cent
Total	297	100.0	265	100.0	25	100.0	7	100.0
No previous residence	112	37.7	111	41.9	1	4.0	—	—
Dofia Ana County outside present residence	30	26.9	75	28.3	5	20.0	—	—
New Mexico outside Dofia Ana County	19	6.4	15	5.7	4	16.0	—	—
Other states	47	15.8	27	10.2	14	56.0	6†	85.7
Foreign countries	29	9.8	28*	10.5	—	—	1‡	14.3
Unknown	10	3.4	9	3.4	1	4.0	—	—

\* All born in Mexico.

† All Negroes.

‡ Japanese.

previous residence of the heads that have moved to the centers studied. These data are presented in Table 19, but it must be remembered that they do not give any measure of the extent or frequency of movement prior to location at the last previous residence. It is possible, however, to draw some conclusion with reference to this point in the light of other data on mobility.

The data in Table 19 should be compared with those in Table 17. A comparison of these two tables shows that for the Spanish-Americans the proportion of heads with no previous residence is slightly smaller than the proportion born in the place of residence. Four heads born in the centers had moved away at some time and returned again. Greater differences are to be noticed in other categories. The proportion of heads reporting last previous residence in Dofia Ana County outside the center of residence is one and a half times as great as the proportion reporting place of birth in the same area. The proportion of heads with last previous residence in other states is nearly twice as large as the proportion born in other states. On the other hand, only two-fifths as many heads reported last

previous residence in Mexico as were born in that country. The differences in the number of heads reporting last previous residence and place of birth in these specified areas give some measure of the proportion of the heads that made at least one change of residence prior to the last previous residence. On this basis it appears that of the 145 heads for which both the last previous residence and the place of birth were obtained, seventy-eight, or 53.8 per cent, had made at least one move prior to last place of residence. Quantitative data are not available as to the number of moves made by these heads, but it may be assumed that the number making more than one move has been small, since Table 17 shows that over two-fifths of all heads were born in their place of residence and since the proportion of heads moving would be likely to decrease as the number of moves increased. Furthermore, data obtained show that of the 145 heads of known previous residence, fifty-seven, or 39.3 per cent, were living then at the place at which they were born.

With respect to the Anglo-American heads, slightly over half reported last previous residence in states other than New Mexico. The last previous residence of the remainder was either in Doña Ana County or in New Mexico, outside of Doña Ana County. All of the Negro heads gave both place of birth and last previous residence in states other than New Mexico.

### *Reason for Moving to Centers*

An attempt was made to ascertain the reason why the heads moved to the centers in which they now reside. The answers received were often quite ambiguous and in many cases not very satisfactory. A little less than one-third of the heads stated that they came to work, and approximately one-tenth to farm, and one-sixth because they had relatives in the centers. The rest reported a variety of reasons.

### *Children Away from Home*

The preceding discussion on mobility has all dealt with the movement of the heads of households now residing in the eight selected villages and hamlets included in this study. No information was obtained on the number or destination of any

households that may have left the centers. However, some data were collected relative to children not living in the households of their parents. These data throw some light upon the mobility of the children. Discussion here has been limited to the children of Spanish-American households.

Table 20 shows the residence of Spanish-American children not living in the homes of their parents. It will be seen from this table that nearly one-third reside in the center where their parents live. Nearly another third live in some other place in Doña Ana County than the place of residence of their parents. Approximately one-tenth live in other counties in New Mexico, and nearly one-fourth live in other states. In other words, the tendency has been for the children to stay either in the center or to move only to some other locality within the county. In general, change of residence to some other part of the county has been to nearby centers or localities. However, where the children have left the county altogether, they have tended to go to other states rather than to stay in New Mexico. California has drawn more of the children than any other state, forty-three having gone to that state. Of the remainder, seventeen have gone to Texas, five to Arizona, and one to Oklahoma.

The sons have shown a greater tendency than the daughters to stay in their home center, but with respect to change of residence to other places in Doña Ana County, the tendency has been the reverse. In neither case, however, have the differences been marked. Approximately the same proportions of sons and daughters have gone to other counties in New Mexico, and other states.

TABLE 20

RESIDENCE OF SPANISH-AMERICAN CHILDREN NOT LIVING AT HOME IN EIGHT  
SELECTED VILLAGES AND HAMLETS, BY SEX, 1939

Place of residence	Total		Male	Female
	Number	Per cent		
Total	269	100.0	140	129
Home center	87	32.4	49	38
Doña Ana County outside home center	85	31.6	39	46
New Mexico outside Doña Ana County	28	10.4	16	12
Other states	66	24.5	36	30
Foreign countries	3	1.1	—	3

From Table 20 it is seen that slightly over two-thirds of the children not living with their parents have left their home center. It remains to be shown how the number in this group compares with the number of children residing in the home center regardless of whether living at home or in separate households. This is shown in Table 21. As would be expected, the proportion of children in the 15-19 year age group living away from the centers where their parents reside is rather small, only 12.8 per cent. The proportion in the older age groups is larger, ranging from 43.6 for the 20-24 year age group to 59.5 per cent for the 35-39 year age group. The proportion increases as the age increases up to the age of forty. The proportion for the persons forty years of age and over is less than for either the 30-34 or the 35-39 age group. If the number of cases were larger it might be concluded that the movement of children away from the centers is of more recent occurrence.

### FAMILY INTERRELATIONSHIPS

A commonly accepted statement often made is that a large proportion of the inhabitants of Spanish-American villages and

TABLE 21

PROPORTION OF TOTAL NUMBER OF LIVING CHILDREN BORN TO SPANISH-AMERICAN HOUSEHOLDS LIVING IN CENTERS AND AT SPECIFIED RESIDENCES AWAY FROM CENTERS IN EIGHT SELECTED VILLAGES AND HAMLETS, BY SPECIFIED AGE GROUPS, 1930\*

Age group	Total number of children		Residence in home center		Place of residence outside center					
					Total	N. M.				Foreign
	Doña Ana County outside center	Doña Ana County		Other counties						
		No.	%							
Total	462	100.0	285	61.7	177	38.3	84	27	63	3
15-19	141	100.0	123	87.2	18	12.8	7	3	8	—
20-24	117	100.0	56	56.4	51	43.6	26	4	20	1
25-29	80	100.0	41	51.2	39	48.8	20	3	15	1
30-34	52	100.0	23	45.1	28	54.9	12	9	7	—
35-39	42	100.0	17	40.5	25	59.5	12	4	8	1
40 and over	31	100.0	15	48.4	16	51.6	7	5	5	—

\*Does not include seven children of unknown ages, five of which live away from the centers.



hamlets are related to each other. Data already presented have given some indication that this might be the case. It has been shown that about one-sixth of the heads moving to the centers included in this study came because they had relatives in the centers. It was also found that nearly one-third of the children who have left the households of their parents reside in the center in which their parents live. More specific and detailed data on family interrelationships among the Spanish-Americans included in this study may be found in Table 22. Before these data are examined a brief explanation of the type of interrelationships listed must be given.

Study of relationship between the heads of the households was attempted in only limited measure. Furthermore, only certain degrees of relationships have been enumerated. The data in Table 22 refer only to relationships of three kinds, namely, parent-child, sibling, and in-law relationships. The more distant relationships have not been included. Moreover, it must again be stressed that the information collected on relationships refers only to the heads of households. In a good many instances this procedure has necessitated the exclusion of relationships which strictly speaking are as close as some of those which have been enumerated. For example, the wife of the head of a household might be a sister-in-law of the head of another household. Such a relationship would to all intents and purposes be as close a degree of relationship as that

TABLE 22

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HEADS OF SPANISH-AMERICAN HOUSEHOLDS IN  
EIGHT SELECTED VILLAGES AND HAMLETS, BY CENTER, 1939

Center	Total number of heads in center	Number of relationships										
		Total Number of heads	Per cent of all heads	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Total	265	187	70.6	73	50	34	17	7	4	—	1	1
Angostura	15	7	46.7	4	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Berino	29	18	62.1	14	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Chamberino	20	10	50.0	6	3	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Doña Ana	88	75	85.2	19	21	17	7	5	4	—	1	1
Leasburg	11	8	72.7	6	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Old Picacho	18	6	33.3	2	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—
Placitas	43	34	79.1	16	9	6	3	—	—	—	—	—
Rodey	41	29	70.7	6	8	1	6	2	—	—	—	—

in which the head is a brother-in-law of another head. Yet these cases have been excluded because it was felt that accurate and complete data had not been obtained. The degrees of relationship which have been enumerated, however, do give some measure of the extent to which the households of the various centers are interrelated.

Table 22 shows that among the Spanish-Americans 70.6 per cent of the household heads are related to one or more other heads. There was some variation between the different centers. In the village of Doña Ana over 85 per cent of the heads are related to other heads, but in Old Picacho only one-third of the heads are related.

While the proportion of heads related to other heads is important, it does not give a true picture unless the number of relationships of each head is taken into consideration. The number of households related to given numbers of other heads is shown in Table 22 for each of the centers studied. From the table it is observed that in Doña Ana, Rodey, and Placitas a relatively large number of heads are related to more than one head. In Doña Ana one head is related to nine other heads and one head to eight other heads. The percentage distribution of the number of relationships between the related heads is summarized for all centers in Table 23. Slightly over 60 per cent of all the related household heads are related to two or more heads. The heads are, on the average, related to 2.2 other heads.

TABLE 23

PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF NUMBER OF RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HEADS OF SPANISH-AMERICAN HOUSEHOLDS IN EIGHT SELECTED VILLAGES AND HAMLETS, 1939

Number of relationships	Number	Per cent
Total	187	100.0
1	73	39.1
2	50	26.7
3	34	18.2
4	17	9.1
5	7	3.7
6	4	2.2
7	—	—
8	1	0.5
9	1	0.5

The data presented in the preceding paragraphs bear out the contention that there is a high degree of interrelationship between the households in Spanish-American villages and hamlets. The significance of interrelationships to the problem at hand will be shown in the next chapter.

The villages and hamlets included in this study and some of the characteristics of their population have now been described. These centers, located on the mesas at the edge of the irrigated area in the Rio Grande Valley, were shown to have only a limited number of agencies and institutions. The population is predominantly Spanish-American and of normal age and sex distribution. With respect to marital status, the population is closely similar to that for New Mexico as a whole. Various types of households are present. The educational status of the inhabitants is low. Most of the households, connected with agricultural activity in some manner, are of low economic status. Living conditions indicate a very low standard of living. Lack of transportation and communication facilities is characteristic for a large proportion of the households. Services and activities are in most instances obtained from nearby larger centers. The inhabitants of the centers are not very mobile. Finally, a large number of the households are related to other households in the centers. It now must be ascertained what the social-cultural processes are which determine the type of social organization which has been found to exist in the eight selected villages and hamlets which are being given special consideration in this study.

## CHAPTER III

# THE ROLE OF SOCIAL-CULTURAL PROCESSES IN SOCIAL ORGANIZATION IN SELECTED VILLAGES AND HAMLETS

Before discussing the role which various social-cultural processes play in determining social organization in the villages and hamlets selected for study, brief attention should be given to the nature of the social process, types of social processes, and the importance of social processes in social organization. Out of this theoretical consideration the functioning of the social processes can be better understood.

### THE SOCIAL PROCESS AS A CONCEPT

As used in this monograph, *social processes* refer to the forms of interaction which characterize a given social group and which influence the members of this group in their personal and group relationships. The following quotation sets forth the nature of social processes as they are thought of in this chapter:

Social processes are those procedures, forms of action, or movements among people which are both fundamental to social life and which as actions or movements modify and influence the relations of persons to each other and of groups of persons to other groups. It is evident that the social processes result from contact and interaction. In analyzing the various social processes, in fact, we are but examining into the details of the larger and fundamental process of interaction itself.<sup>1</sup>

The fundamental process of interaction referred to in the above quotation is present in any social group. It may apply both to large groups and to a few individuals. Without some form of interaction social life would not exist. It is the basic process making for social organization and social change. As Park and Burgess write:

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<sup>1</sup> Kimball Young, *Source Book for Sociology*, American Book Company, New York, 1935, p. 347.

Society stated in mechanistic terms reduces to interaction. A person is a member of society so long as he responds to social forces; when interaction ends, he is isolated and detached; he ceases to be a person and becomes a "lost soul." This is the reason that the limits of society are coterminous with the limits of interaction, that is, of the participation of persons in the life of society.<sup>2</sup>

Out of the basic process of interaction come certain special social processes. These will vary with time and place, but in all instances they are fundamental to an understanding of the social organization of any particular group. As Dr. Kimball Young says:

Social processes are distinctly related to the social order or social organization. In fact the study of social processes is but one manner of viewing society, while the study of social order and culture constitutes another way of looking at the same thing. One might with profit refer to the old familiar analogy of function and structure. When we analyze the social processes we are concerned with the social functions, the interactional patterns of individuals and groups. When we analyze social organization and culture we are dealing more especially with the framework or structure of society. Truly structure and function go hand in hand, and it is useless to try to treat one without reference to the other.<sup>3</sup>

Many different types of social processes have been suggested and the number and types vary considerably depending on the person making the classification. Dr. E. A. Ross, for example, lists thirty-eight social processes.<sup>4</sup> Park and Burgess, on the other hand, have seen fit to group the forms of interaction into four major processes, namely, competition, conflict, accommodation, and assimilation.<sup>5</sup> Others have tended to classify social processes somewhere between these two extremes. No attempt has been made in this study to fit the discussion of social-cultural processes as they relate to the problem to any particular classification. Instead, the writer has given consideration to some of the processes that have been recognized by others as forms of interaction and has in addi-

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<sup>2</sup>Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1924, p. 342.

<sup>3</sup>Young, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

<sup>4</sup>E. A. Ross, *Principles of Sociology*, Century, New York, 1925, pp. 77-554.

<sup>5</sup>Park and Burgess, *op. cit.*, pp. 504-784.

tion suggested one or two other processes which are considered as important in determining social organization in the Spanish-American villages and hamlets which are included in this study. He has used the term "social-cultural processes" instead of the term "social processes" because some of the processes are of a more strictly cultural nature than those usually thought of as forms of interaction.

Before consideration is given to the role of social-cultural processes it is necessary to refer to agricultural changes in the area studied as they have affected the population and the social organization of the centers. In addition, reference must be made to the relative lack of agencies and institutions in the centers.

### THE INFLUENCE OF AGRICULTURAL CHANGES

In an earlier chapter it was pointed out that the first settlers in Doña Ana County were Spanish-Americans. Settlement was made along the banks of the Rio Grande, and the first efforts were made to farm the fertile soil of the Valley. Because of the lack of rainfall, it was necessary from the very beginning to put into practice some form of irrigation. The methods used were of a primitive nature and had to be carried on without storage facilities. Such practices as prevailed came through private efforts but on a group basis rather than on an individual basis. Irrigation practices were not efficient, but they served the purpose and were an adaptation to meet prevailing conditions.

The land which the early Spanish-American settlers in New Mexico farmed was, in most instances, obtained through land grants from the Mexican government. The grants were large tracts of land to which, in each case, a number of families acquired ownership. A number of these land grants were located in Doña Ana County. One of these was the Doña Ana Bend Colony Grant which was acquired by the original settlers of the village of Doña Ana. Grants also were made later to Spanish-American settlers by the United States Government, but in the form of small tracts of land to individual families instead of large tracts to groups of families. Later acquisitions

were obtained through purchase. The important thing is that the Spanish-Americans owned the land which they farmed. With the acquisition of New Mexico by the United States, Anglo-Americans began to arrive in the county and gradually acquired land holdings. Still, land ownership for a number of decades continued to be predominantly in Spanish-American hands, especially since this cultural group, for a considerable time, greatly outnumbered the Anglo-Americans. The acreage owned by each Spanish-American farmer was not large (although there were some large holdings), but it was owned by him, and it was sufficient to provide him with a certain degree of economic security.

The first Spanish-American settlers lived in village or hamlet centers. Land was mostly farmed adjacent to these centers, primarily because irrigation was best carried on through cooperation between a number of farm operators. It was therefore quite logical that the farmers should reside in the centers. As has been mentioned previously, protection against Indians and other undesirable elements was also a factor in concentration in centers, as was the desire for association. As time went on, however, some of the farmers moved out on the farms, especially in cases where larger holdings were acquired. This movement away from the centers to dispersed farmsteads did not necessarily destroy any ties which such families had in the centers. More important, it did not change the type of land tenure. Ownership continued to prevail. It is true that an increasing number of Anglo-Americans had begun to acquire land holdings and to engage in farming, but at the beginning of the present century the majority of the farmers were Spanish-Americans. A self-sufficient agricultural economy prevailed.

The change which took place in the agricultural economy in Doña Ana County since the turn of the century has been discussed in detail in a previous chapter. The effect of large-scale irrigation as a result of the construction of the Elephant Butte Reservoir has already been discussed. To summarize this effect again, the coming of the irrigation project brought about the imposition of large financial burdens on the farmers because of the cost of the project. Construction and water costs called for more efficient farming methods. The result was the develop

ment of a more highly commercialized type of farming than had existed previously. Commercial production for a cash market increased. The introduction of cotton, in 1918, accentuated the process of commercialization of farming which the construction of the irrigation project had begun. Cotton is a cash crop, involves a large cash outlay, and does not fit into a self-sufficient farm economy.

As a consequence of the commercialized type of farming resulting from the completion of the irrigation project and the introduction of cotton, the economic security of the Spanish-American farmers was threatened. In fact, the economic insecurity which characterizes the bulk of the Spanish-Americans in Doña Ana County today is an outgrowth of the change to commercial agriculture which has been discussed. A number of factors involved may be mentioned.

An important effect of the agricultural changes which took place was the disruption of the self-sufficing economy which had prevailed. Under the earlier economy the farmers had been able to supply a major portion of their food needs from their farms. It must be remembered that the diet of the Spanish-Americans, even today, is limited to relatively few types of foods. The main items in the diet consist of *tortillas* (a flat cake made out of corn), beans, and chili. The corn, the beans, and the chili earlier were all raised on the land which the Spanish-Americans owned. The first of these was ground into meal at home. Thus, from the standpoint of food wants, the average Spanish-American farm was characterized by a high degree of self-sufficiency. In other respects, also, the farms were self-sufficing. This situation changed materially with the coming of commercialized agriculture. In the first place, many of the Spanish-American farmers lost their land and were not able to raise any products to meet their food needs. The loss of their lands will be discussed in more detail below. Secondly, the commercialized type of agriculture which came to prevail led to the abandonment of the old practice of raising produce for home consumption on many farms that still remained in the hands of Spanish-American farmers either as owners or as tenants. One prominent citizen in the county informed the writer that during periods of high cotton prices cotton often



was planted right up to the dwellings on a farm, since it was more profitable to raise cotton and buy all items used for food. The result was that new habits and practices were established which were not easily changed later when a lower price of cotton would have made it desirable to return to the old practice of raising produce on the farm for home consumption. Another example may be given to illustrate the change away from a self-sufficient economy. One storekeeper in an open-country store stated that today half of his Spanish-American customers buy their chili from him and also buy corn meal for making *tortillas* rather than raising these items as formerly. Many similar illustrations could be given. Often housewives refer rather sadly to the days when they knew they would have something to eat because they raised it on their farms. In short, many Spanish-American families have found that they are no longer able to meet their own needs as sufficiently as before the introduction of a commercialized type of agriculture.

A second consequence of the introduction of commercialized farming in the area was the loss of land by a large proportion of the Spanish-American farm owners. These were supplanted by Anglo-American farmers who swelled the ranks of this cultural group that had gradually been coming into the Valley over a number of decades. The loss of lands was brought about either through sale or foreclosure. The latter came about because of the heavy financial burden which was mentioned above as resulting from the introduction of large-scale irrigation. Many Spanish-American farmers could not adapt themselves to the more efficient farming methods which became necessary, and because of heavy financial encumbrances lost their land through foreclosure. Others sold their lands because of high prices. To many Spanish-American farmers who never had been in possession of any great amount of money, the prices which were offered for the land seemed to make the sale of their land a desirable step. The high land prices both directly and indirectly resulted from the construction of the Elephant Butte Reservoir. Both the establishment of a permanent water supply and the profitable practice of raising cotton increased land values. These two factors also brought about increased migration of Anglo-Americans into

the area, and this in turn further increased the price of land. As a result of the high land values, many Spanish-American farmers sold their land. Unfortunately, the proceeds from the sale of the land were in many instances not turned to some use which would insure a dependable economic return in the future. The whole result has been that the sale of land coupled with the loss of farms through foreclosure led to the dispossession of a large proportion of former Spanish-American land owners.

As a consequence of the loss of their land by a large proportion of the Spanish-American farmers, a third important factor must be mentioned, namely, the increase of the agricultural-worker class. Some of the dispossessed Spanish-American farmers continued to work upon the land they formerly owned, but now as tenants instead of owners. The majority, however, having no other means of livelihood, became agricultural laborers. They joined the ranks of the farm-labor class which had gradually been formed from the resident landless population and by immigration from Mexico. Commercialized agriculture for a time called for an increasing number of farm laborers and work opportunities were available to the dispossessed farmers. Later, mechanization of agriculture and the development of large farms decreased the demand for farm laborers except during certain seasons of the year.

The result of the dispossession of the Spanish-American farmers and the entrance of the majority of the dispossessed farmers into the farm-labor class was a lowering of the economic status of the members of the former owners as well as of the people already in the laboring class. The latter suffered because of competition arising from the swelling of their ranks, and the former were reduced to a position where their only means of livelihood was the sale of their labor. From their income as laborers they had to pay out cash for commodities which they had formerly been able to produce themselves. This led to a decline in their economic status both from the standpoint of the amount of economic goods available for living and from the standpoint of economic security.

A final consequence of the changing agricultural economy in Doña Ana County was the movement of the dispossessed

Spanish-American farmers to the small villages and hamlets in the area. In an earlier chapter it was stated that some of the farm owners in the county live in the centers adjacent to their farms, although not to any appreciable degree so far as the villages and hamlets included in this study are concerned. It was also pointed out above that some of the dispossessed Spanish-American farmers stayed on the farms as tenants. Others stayed as farm laborers. Many of them, however, moved to the villages and hamlets in the area, where they for the most part became members of the farm-labor group residing in these centers. It is this movement to the villages and hamlets which to a large degree explains why these centers have continued to exist. As a result of the movement to the centers growing out of changes in the agricultural economy of *Doña Ana County*, a large proportion of the heads of the households in the villages and hamlets of the county consists of farm laborers. This was found to be the case in the villages and hamlets with which this study deals.

Considerable attention has been given here to agricultural changes which have occurred in the area because it is believed that it would be impossible to see the full significance of the social-cultural processes operating in the selected centers without understanding the nature of the agricultural changes which have taken place.

### LACK OF AGENCIES AND INSTITUTIONS

In the preceding chapter it was shown that there were only a very limited number of economic agencies in most of the eight centers included in this study and that in some instances there were none at all. Such economic agencies as exist are only small enterprises and provide service to meet only the very minimum needs. As a result, many of the households have utilized economic services outside the centers. Some families have utilized local economic services, others have used them only in part, and still others have not made use of them at all. With respect to medical services, the residents of all the centers

have had to obtain these services in some nearby larger center. The same has been true with regard to recreational activity in the form of motion pictures. In general, it may be said that the centers studied do not have sufficient services of the types mentioned to satisfy the needs of the inhabitants and therefore to serve as a cohesive factor in the social organization of the centers.

The church and the school are the only two institutions which might serve to hold the people together. There is no formal organized government other than the precinct in which the centers are located. Even church and schools are not present in some cases. Where there is a school it may not be a binding factor. Three of the hamlets have no schools in or near the center, and one center is located about a mile from the school which the children attend. In one of the villages, the children attend school in a nearby larger center. In all instances, high school pupils have to go to some other center. Furthermore, where there are schools located in the centers, these do not necessarily enhance group consciousness, since the schools have been placed at their respective locations not so much because of the desire of the inhabitants as because such location fits into the administrative scheme of the rural elementary school system of the county.

The three hamlets without any school are also without any church, and one of the villages has only a Catholic chapel. In the centers with a church, this type of institution does fill an important place in the lives of the residents and is one of the forces around which they can find a common interest.

The existence of relatively few economic agencies, many of these having only limited importance, and in many instances the total lack of social institutions creates a situation in which there is little basis for common interests and activities. This situation is further accentuated by the fact that there are no public facilities for obtaining electric light, disposing of sewage, and providing a water supply. The absence of these facilities creates a condition in which the center plays a much less important part than it would under circumstances where these facilities were all a matter of common or public concern.

## ISOLATION

Person-to-person and group-to-group relationships may either be those of contact or those of isolation. Social processes are the result of the interplay of social contact and isolation.<sup>6</sup> Throughout the succeeding sections of this chapter the effects of contact upon individual and group behavior in the selected villages and hamlets may be seen. For the present, emphasis is to be placed upon isolation and its importance in relation to the social-cultural processes which are considered important to an understanding of social organization in the area concerned.

*The Meaning of Isolation*

Before discussing the importance of isolation in the villages and hamlets treated in this study, brief reference should be made to the meaning of the term. The meaning of isolation is aptly put by one writer as follows:

*Isolation* means a limitation of the opportunity for stimulus and response. It grows out of a social situation which circumscribes the range of interaction. The limitations of contact or interaction depend chiefly on biological, psychological, geographical, and cultural factors.<sup>7</sup>

Of the four factors which the above author considers as fostering isolation, attention will only be given to two, namely, the geographical and the cultural factors.

*Geographical Isolation*

In considering geographical isolation in connection with the centers studied, it is important to refer again to historical factors determining the location of the centers. As has been pointed out previously, they were located on the mesas primarily as a protection against the danger of the flood waters of the Rio Grande. At the time when these centers were started, they were, in most instances, closer to the main avenues of thoroughfare than at present. Developments subsequent to the time of settlement removed the lines of transportation away from the

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 226-233.

<sup>7</sup> Kimball Young, *An Introductory Sociology*. American Book Company, New York, 1934, p. 103.

centers. The result has been that some of the centers are now located away from the main areas of activity. Furthermore, the absence of open-country population around the centers has also made them geographically isolated.

Park and Burgess state that geographical forms of isolation are sociologically significant in so far as they prevent communication.<sup>8</sup> This is exactly what has taken place with regard to many of the Spanish-American villages and hamlets in Doña Ana County and especially those which are given emphasis in this study. It was shown in the previous chapter that transportation and communication facilities are very limited in the centers. Without such facilities the range of social contacts has been and still is limited, and the individual and group behavior of the inhabitants of the centers have been affected thereby.

### *Cultural Isolation*

Cultural factors also have served to increase the isolation of the Spanish-American villages and hamlets. These cultural factors may or may not be related to geographical isolation. On the one hand, the limited services and facilities in the centers have to some extent increased the contacts of the inhabitants with the outside. On the other hand, the lack of social participation which has resulted in a degree of cultural isolation has in part grown out of geographical isolation.

Cultural isolation in the centers has been fostered by language and other cultural differences. As Young states,

Cultural isolation arises where there is a strong we-group *versus* others-group feeling. Language differences make this distinction all the more evident, since language is a basic feature of any culture.<sup>9</sup>

There is a strong we-group feeling among the Spanish-Americans in the villages and hamlets, not with reference to Spanish-Americans outside the centers but with reference to Anglo-Americans as a whole. The importance of this feeling will be seen in following sections, but a few aspects of cultural isolation in general may be brought out at this point.

As a result of the cultural isolation which prevails, contacts

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<sup>8</sup> Park and Burgess, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

<sup>9</sup> Young, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

of the Spanish-Americans in the centers have been limited largely to members of their own cultural group and especially to the people residing in their own center. This has made for the persistence of old habits, ideas, and attitudes. Social change consequently has been slow. Because of the lack of outside contacts, the importance of the family has been greater than it would otherwise have been. Similarly, the church has exerted a great influence on the habits of the people. In addition, the interaction of individuals with members of their own cultural group has been increased. Finally, a most important consequence of the cultural isolation which has existed has been the failure to make the readjustments necessitated by the social changes which have been taken place outside the centers.

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that in spite of cultural isolation in the centers, new ideas are being brought into them. Yet so great has been the influence of isolation in the past that it is still an important factor to consider.

### ASSOCIATION

The concentration of a large proportion of the Spanish-Americans in small villages and hamlets is, in part, due to the associative tendencies of these people. Spanish-Americans are characterized by a high degree of gregariousness. This has manifested itself particularly in the sociability aspects of interaction. It was found that one of the favorite diversions of the households included in this study was visiting with other households. This tendency is not just an outgrowth of the concentration of the population in centers, but also has been a factor in bringing the people together in these centers and in keeping them there.

While it is difficult to draw any definite conclusions as to why Spanish-Americans should be particularly gregarious, some indication may be obtained by examining their historical background. It must be remembered that the Spanish-Americans residing in New Mexico either came from Mexico or have descended from people who came from that country. It is also necessary to recognize the fact that while this group is a Spanish-speaking people, they are predominantly of Indian

ancestry. It is estimated that not more than 300,000 Spaniards ever settled in Mexico. Intermarriage with the natives took place, but the Indian blood has continued to predominate. The Indians and *mestizos*<sup>10</sup> are estimated to constitute 96 per cent of the total population of Mexico at present.<sup>11</sup> The Spanish-Americans residing in New Mexico today must not be regarded as descendants of the Spanish conquerors but rather of the Indians and *mestizos*. Since this is the case, it is the group life of the Indians and the *mestizos* that has to be considered in looking for an explanation in the Mexican background of the associative tendencies of the Spanish-Americans.

Studies of social life in Mexico show that a large majority of the inhabitants of that country in the past have lived and still live in free villages or *hacienda* villages. The free village is characterized by primitive communism and native agricultural methods making for a balanced economy. The *hacienda* villages, on the other hand, are dominated by a landlord and characterized more by Spanish crops and agricultural methods and are closely related to the large farms known as *haciendas* which began under Spanish rule and continued under Mexican rule. The nature of the *hacienda* and its relation to the *hacienda* villages is well expressed in the following words:

To my mind the hacienda was the major contribution of Spain to the organic life of Mexico. Where it functioned strongly, it twisted the Indian pattern more violently than any other imported institution. The Church twisted souls, but the hacienda affected bread and butter—or better, corn and beans; it went straight to economic roots. An hacienda was—and still is to a degree—a giant farm, under the absolute domination of an individual with powers often running back to royal grant, and a largely self-sustaining economic unit. It is feudalism plus. Along with the grant of land went a grant of Indians. The inhabitants of one or more villages were assigned to work the farm of the patentee. Gradually they lost their status as citizens of the Aztec confederacy, and became to all intents and purposes serfs of the landowner.<sup>12</sup>

The important thing to note here is that the *hacienda* villages and the free villages include the majority of the popula-

<sup>10</sup> Persons of mixed blood.

<sup>11</sup> Stuart Chase, *Mexico*, Macmillan, New York, 1931, pp. 230-231.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90.



tion of Mexico. It is estimated that 85 per cent of the total population of the country reside in these two types of villages. Put in another way, an estimated 12 per cent are living in places of less than one hundred population and 57 per cent in places of one hundred to one thousand population.<sup>13</sup> The population of Mexico thus is concentrated largely in small centers. This situation has prevailed for centuries. Out of such a system of social organization came the individuals who migrated to what is now New Mexico and who, in this study, are called Spanish-Americans. In the light of the tendency of the people to live in association in the area from which the migrants came, it is possible that this tendency carried over to the new era of settlement.

The associative tendencies of the Spanish-Americans are related both to the origin of the centers studied and to the persistence of these centers. With respect to the former, a number of factors enter into the situation. In the first place, as pointed out earlier the new settlers tended to group together in order to facilitate their efforts at irrigation. Secondly, the element of protection against outsiders was considered. In the third place, family relationships were a factor in that related families tended to settle together. Finally, settlement was made in centers because, in view of the lack of transportation and communication facilities, dispersed settlement would have made for relatively great geographical isolation. Still, in spite of all of these factors it is doubtful whether the people who first settled in the centers would have concentrated in groups if some associative tendency had not been present in the culture of the people.

The role of association in the persistence of the centers must not be minimized. In this case family relationships are extremely important, but association also operates outside the family groups. At any rate, it has served to continue the existence of the centers in two ways. In the first place, it has drawn the people to centers already established. Such a movement was discussed as a result of the loss of lands by the Spanish-Americans. It was also shown that a large proportion

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<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 230.

of the people moving to the centers came because they had relatives there. In the second place, through their desire to associate with individuals of their own kind a large proportion of the inhabitants have remained in the centers when otherwise it might have been desirable to leave.

### CULTURAL INERTIA

The social and economic conditions in the villages and hamlets, as described in preceding chapters and to some extent in this chapter, do not indicate a situation that provides very many opportunities for the inhabitants of the centers. Opportunities for social participation are limited and for many families a considerable degree of economic insecurity prevails. Furthermore, this is not a temporary condition but rather one which seems bound to continue in the light of changing economic conditions in the wider area. In spite of such conditions there is a tendency on the part of the inhabitants to remain in the centers. A question therefore arises as to why there seems to be little effort made to leave the villages and hamlets in spite of the evident social maladjustment which prevails.

It is granted, as will be shown shortly, that there is little outside the centers to attract the people away from them, but part of the explanation is due to what may be called cultural inertia. The mode of living has become a well-established condition and as such continues in spite of any lag that may have resulted. It is true that family relationships tend to keep many people in the centers. This will be elaborated on in the following section, but it is relevant here to point out that in other cultural situations family ties do not necessarily act as a hindrance to mobility away from a locality in which conditions of life no longer are satisfactory. In view of this fact, the importance of sheer inertia in explaining stability of residence must not be overlooked. The fact of inertia, however, must be interpreted somewhat in the light of prevailing economic conditions.

To the outsider, stability of residence on the part of so many of the residents of the centers is difficult to understand

in view of the lack of prevailing opportunities connected with continued residence in the centers. Yet, when conditions are examined more closely, the question of possible incentives to change of residence looms large. In most instances there is no incentive to leave the centers. Similar conditions prevail elsewhere in rural areas in the county and in the state for that matter. Opportunities in urban centers are few. Movement to other states does not provide a desirable alternative, since new adjustments would have to be made even if economic conditions in other states were favorable. Such adjustments would be difficult, if not impossible, since these people have not become accustomed to making changes. There is no good reason to believe that the individuals or families who might desire to leave the centers could see any brighter future resulting from change of residence.

Such a condition does not act as a force to make the Spanish-Americans leave the centers in which they live, but the contention is made here that even if better opportunities existed elsewhere, a large majority of the residents would continue to live in the villages and hamlets simply because of an apathy to any sort of change. It is a generally accepted fact that the persistence of old habits acts as a hindrance to cultural change. The same may apply to change of residence. To many Spanish-Americans residing in small population centers, it is easiest to continue to live within the old patterns of behavior. Residence in the centers is rooted in the past, and the past has its hold on the residents. Inertia, rather than change, has become the way of life.

An illustration of this tendency to continue an established pattern of behavior may be taken from some of the cases included in this study. It has been shown that a large proportion of the residents of the centers were born in the center where they reside. This applies to old people as well as to the younger ones. Time and again the answer to the question "Where were you born?" was given in a tone that implied that it was the most natural thing in the world that the interviewee should have been born in the center where he resides. The answer so often was "*aquí, aquí*," meaning "here, here," and it was given in a manner as if to ask "Where else would I have been born?"

This attitude was shown in numerous instances by interviewees of almost every age. The impression that has been obtained is that it has never occurred to the person interviewed that it might have been desirable for him to live elsewhere.

It is this type of inertia or unwillingness to make changes that, in some measure, explains why the Spanish-Americans continue to live where they do and why the centers where they reside continue to exist. Social change in its wider aspects has created maladjustments for these people, but new adjustments have not been possible because the state of inertia that has developed has made it difficult to effect the necessary changes.

### THE FAMILY

The family is the basis of a social structure in all human societies. Everywhere it is the basic primary group.<sup>14</sup> The cultural group to which these people belong is no exception. Not only is the family the basic primary group among the Spanish-Americans but, as such, it assumes relatively greater importance than in many other cultural groups in the United States because of the absence or relative unimportance of other types of groups, primary or otherwise. It was shown in a previous chapter that the neighborhood and the community as social groups do not play such an important part in the social structure of Doña Ana County. On the other hand, it was shown that the small villages and hamlets constitute the most numerous type of locality group. Many of these centers, however, do not serve to create a consciousness of local unity except on a geographical basis.

The fact that locality groups, such as the neighborhood, the community, and to some extent the villages and hamlets, have not been the groups around which the Spanish-Americans have become conscious of local unity might be explained if there had been a shifting emphasis from locality to interest, as has been the case in other parts of the United States.<sup>15</sup> But there

<sup>14</sup> Kimball Young, *Source Book for Sociology*, American Book Company, New York, 1935, p. 214.

<sup>15</sup> J. H. Kolb, and Edmund de Brunner, *A Story of Rural Society*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1935, pp. 162-163.

has not been enough of such a shift among the Spanish-Americans to account for the absence of local consciousness in the various types of locality groups. This may be seen by observing the place which special-interest groups occupy in the villages and hamlets studied. As a matter of fact there are no organized special-interest groups in any of the centers. The only organized group activity has been in connection with the church and this has not developed to a degree to make for special-interest groups. There are no educational, recreational, economic, or political organizations in the centers and the residents belong to none outside the center. Special-interest groups are not common among the Spanish-Americans as a whole. As a matter of fact, this type of social group is not very widespread in rural areas in Doña Ana County. This may be illustrated with reference to social organizations. Most of the social organizations in the county are located in Las Cruces. The most important exceptions are the socio-economic and youth-serving groups. These are located mostly in rural areas because of the fact that Farm Bureau locals and home demonstration groups are included in the socio-economic category and 4-H groups in the youth-serving category. In general, sociability and recreational activities through social organizations are quite limited in the small centers and in the open country. The same may be said of special-interest groups as a whole.

The problem arising out of the lack of special-interest groups among the Spanish-Americans and the relative lack of such groups in rural areas of the county in general is further accentuated because in such groups as do exist, membership and participation by Spanish-Americans is either entirely prohibited or very limited. For example, the writer attended an annual picnic of the Doña Ana County Farm Bureau Federation. Several hundred people were gathered and yet in the whole group there were not more than five Spanish-Americans. Numerous other illustrations might be given to show that a change of emphasis from locality to interest does not account for the lack of feeling of local consciousness on the part of the inhabitants of the Spanish-American villages and hamlets.

It is because of the lack of special-interest groups as well as the lack of locality-group consciousness that the family

assumes such an important place among the Spanish-Americans. This situation is evident in all the centers studied. The family, together with the interactional behavior growing out of family life, constitutes the most important single factor in the social organization of the centers.

The various phases of family interaction which are discussed below are related to several other factors important in the social organization in the Spanish-American villages and hamlets. The relation of associative tendencies to family interaction has already been discussed. It will be shown that family behavior also ties up with religious behavior. Similarly, the processes of coöperation and disintegration are associated with the family interactional pattern.

### *Family Interrelationships*

In the preceding chapter it was shown that family interrelationships are very common among the Spanish-Americans in the selected villages and hamlets. This large amount of family interrelationship plays an important part in the social organization of the Spanish-American centers. In the first place, such interrelationships tend to increase family solidarity. Secondly, they serve as a force to keep a large proportion of the population in the centers. Finally, sociability in the center is closely related to family interrelationship. It is the first of these three results of family interrelationships which is the most important and which will be considered here.

There is considerable evidence of family solidarity in the villages and hamlets. One line of evidence is the tendency of a large proportion of the children who have left the household of their parents to continue residence in the centers. This tendency is, in part, due to reluctance to move any great distance from other family members. Family ties are strong and the group solidarity which has developed within a family is not disrupted easily. There is further evidence of this in that, in some families, a married son or daughter has never left home but lives with his or her spouse at home with the parents. In other instances, a widowed, divorced, or separated son or daughter has returned home and lives with his parents instead

of in a separate household. In the case of daughters who thus live with their parents, it is quite common for them again to assume their maiden name. The interviewers in the field sometimes found it difficult to ascertain the exact degree of relationship between such persons and the head of the household until it was discovered that the family name was being used again.

Not only do a large proportion of the children who marry continue to reside in the centers, but there is a widespread tendency to establish residence in close proximity to the parents. In discussing the type of household tenure in the preceding chapter, it was pointed out that a large number of the households live in dwellings constructed on the family lot. In these cases, as one of the children marries and decides to remain in the center, a new dwelling is constructed right next to the one that is already there. Subsequent structures are then built adjacent to these dwellings. This practice varies somewhat for the different centers; but it is a common practice, and it is one of the reasons for the physical appearance of the centers. More important, it is evidence of a high degree of family solidarity.

Perhaps the best illustration of family solidarity is seen in political activity. This will be discussed in the following section dealing with the family in relation to social control, but it should also be mentioned here as an indication of a high degree of family solidarity. Political interest and activity follow family lines.

The presence of a high degree of family solidarity with its accompanying coöperative effort does not mean that there is no conflict within the family group. Such conflict continually appears but it is an intermittent and not a continuous process. Petty jealousies often exist and may develop into more serious forms of conflict, but these forms of conflict stay within the family group and tend to disappear in the event of crisis.

### *The Family and Social Control*

At no point does the importance of the family among the Spanish-Americans appear to be greater than with respect to its relation to social control. It is largely through the family

that social control is manifested, primarily because other channels of social control, outside of the church, do not exist to a great degree. Social control is usually thought of as being either informal or formal. The first form of social control is illustrated by the mores, religious convictions, and public opinion, and the latter form by the legal and administrative devices laid down by the state or those developed by a group to control its own members.<sup>16</sup> Now, in the Spanish-American villages and hamlets studied, there is very little formal social control of a local nature. There is no village government. The only form of local government is the precinct in which the centers are located, and the only officials of this governmental unit are the constable and the justice of the peace. No effort is made at controlling the behavior of the residents of the centers except for the purpose of maintaining peaceful relations. Because of the isolation of the centers and because of the status of the people living in these centers, formal control by the state outside of the local governmental machinery is not felt to any appreciable degree except in so far as maintenance of peace is concerned. Since there are no organizations in the centers, formal control of the second type mentioned above is also absent. This has resulted in the restriction of social control largely to informal forms. Informal social control is, in part, exercised through the influence of the church, but it has manifested itself largely through the moral codes which, in turn, have operated mostly through the family.

Before a picture of the full importance of the family in relation to social control in the centers can be given, it is necessary to consider a little further the nature of family organization among the Spanish-Americans. The family interrelationships which have been shown to exist give no indication of a type of family group beyond the individual family consisting of parents and offspring. The existence of a type of family organization more inclusive than the individual family may be shown by giving attention to what sociologists have called the "great family."

A "great family" is usually considered to mean a family

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<sup>16</sup> Kimball Young, *An Introductory Sociology*, American Book Company, New York, 1934, pp. 523-524.



group consisting of more than parents and children. It may include parents and their offspring, their children's marriage partners and children, adopted children, and other relatives. There appears to be some question in the minds of some writers as to whether or not all the members of the "great family" need to live under one roof in order to constitute this type of family group. As the term "great family" is used here, such an arrangement is not essential. The "great family" is used to designate a family group of a close degree of relationship, consisting of more than parents and offspring even though such a group may include several families living as separate households.

On the basis of the above definition of the "great family," this type of family group is characteristic of the Spanish-American culture in general and of the villages and hamlets studied. The degree of interrelationship which was found shows this to be the case. Still, it is more than a matter of mere interrelationship, because a number of interrelated families become a new and separate entity, namely, the "great family." This is seen from the meaning implied in a family name. When reference is made to the "Barela family," the "Chavez family," the "Cordova family," or the "Bustamente family," it is, in each case, not a single family that is referred to but rather a group of related families bearing the same name, and daughters of these families who may have married into other families.

A question may be raised as to whether the "great family" as thought of here includes families residing away from the center in which this larger family group is found. Logically this could be the case, since some families related to the larger group reside near enough to make for a degree of family solidarity not essentially different from that which would exist if all the families lived in a center. Related families residing outside a center, however, are not included in the "great family" in the sense the term is used here, because it is the families in the centers which are being considered. The fact is that in all the centers there are groups of families that assume the characteristics of the "great family" as defined above, even if the related family groups outside the centers are excluded.

The presence of family groups that are of a nature similar to the "great family" has been given consideration here because these larger family groups are closely related to social control in the villages and hamlets. The members of the larger family group to a considerable extent follow the leadership of some one member of the family; and through the decisions of this leader or head, control is exercised over the behavior of the rank and file of the group. Patriarchal control is the rule, but there are also instances of matriarchal control. Under either arrangement the importance of the old people is continually recognized. The terms *viejo* and *vieja*, meaning "old man" and "old woman," are used with great frequency and indicate a reverence for the elders.

Social control through the family perhaps finds its most clear-cut expression in political activity. There is widespread interest among the Spanish-Americans in county political affairs. This interest centers in the precinct. One is continually astonished at the knowledge which many individuals in the villages and hamlets have concerning local political situations. For example, the writer was on a field trip trying to ascertain the population of the rural centers which were not studied in detail. Persons interviewed had only a hazy idea as to the size of the center in which they lived, but three persons interviewed consecutively gave immediately the number of registered voters in the precinct at the last election.

The interest in political matters is closely related to the problem of political control. Machine politics are rampant in New Mexico and the situation in Doña Ana County is no exception. At the present time, it is the Democratic party which has the upper hand, but conditions were not different when the Republicans held sway. Political leaders endeavor to line up the voters in each precinct. To a large extent this is possible with the support of key individuals in each precinct who are in a position to deliver a block of votes. These key individuals may be able to swing a block of votes favorably because of their prominence in a rural center or in a precinct, but the practice of securing political support among the Spanish-Americans is enhanced by family solidarity and by the family control exercised by the leader of a group of interrelated families.

The members of the larger family group look to their leader or head for guidance in political activity as well as in other matters. Furthermore, the prominence of such family leaders may insure control of votes outside the family group, although it is the control of votes of the family that is most important.<sup>17</sup>

Some indication needs to be given at this point as to the advantages gained through the political control of the family votes as described above. Such advantages are obtained on a family or an individual basis. The writer has not been able to learn of a single instance where political loyalty has brought returns in the form of some improvement to any of the Spanish-American villages or hamlets included in this study. In fact, practically the only form which compensation to any of the centers could take under existing arrangements would be road improvement, and in the light of the lack of transportation facilities such a reward would be of doubtful value. It is because of such a situation that any return obtained for political loyalty is on a family or an individual basis. Because the votes have been delivered the leader of the family group is in a position to request some advantage for a member of the family.

The system of political control in the larger family group is related to the old *patron-peon* complex which, for many years, prevailed in New Mexico and of which certain manifestations still exist. The Spanish-American *peon* of the past looked to his *patron* when in need. The earlier agricultural economy favored such a relationship, but the changes brought about in the economic life of the Southwest in recent decades, in the main, have destroyed the basis for the continuance of such a relationship. The majority of the Spanish-Americans in the small villages and hamlets no longer have a land-owning *patron* who has their interests at heart and who can provide aid in times of need. Consequently, it has been necessary to seek help elsewhere. That help has been found, at least in part, as a result of the political influence exercised through the leader of the larger family

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<sup>17</sup> The political control through political activity in the villages and hamlets is closely related to the bilingual situation in the county. Political meetings often are conducted with the aid of an interpreter in order to appeal to the Spanish-American element. The interpreter translates from English into Spanish. Without this practice it is doubtful whether the Spanish-American vote could be influenced to the extent that is now the case.

group. These leaders cannot strictly be called *patrones*, although an arrangement has been set up whereby they have taken over many of the functions of the earlier *patrones*. Such an arrangement has been enhanced by the creation of existing so-called emergency relief and social welfare agencies, since, unfortunately, these agencies do not always operate in an impartial manner.

From the preceding discussion it will be seen that the family is very definitely an institution through which social control is imposed on its members. The situation is gradually becoming more complicated, however, because the family is a dynamic institution, and changes are taking place which make problems of social control within the family increasingly difficult. These changes are discussed in the following section.

### *Changing Aspects of Family Life*

While the Spanish-American villages and hamlets studied are relatively isolated, this isolation is breaking down. In spite of the limited means of transportation and communication, contacts with the outside have multiplied. The necessity of going outside the centers for many services, contact with the outside through the schools, recreational and sociability activities, and work opportunities have made it impossible for cultural isolation to continue. As a result of the breakdown of isolation and the increase in social contacts, new ideas and attitudes have affected family life. The attitudes of the young people have been modified, and there is less satisfaction on their part at the prospect of continued residence in the centers than formerly was the case. The lack of opportunity to satisfy new wants and desires which have been created through education and increased contacts in general has resulted in a feeling of dissatisfaction on the part of many children and young people.

Family solidarity is feeling the effect of the influence of outside contacts. The family is still important to the young people because they have been brought up in an atmosphere of familism, but there is a suspicion on their part that family ties do not offer the advantages that they once did.

The result of the social changes that have taken place and

have modified family life has tended to place the parents in a position where they have less control over their children than was the case in the past. It is a problem of conflict of the ideas and attitudes received from increased contacts with those which have prevailed in the home. Family mores no longer are as binding as they once were. As a consequence the families are less highly integrated.

An experience of one of the interviewers in interviewing a family in one of the selected villages illustrates both the changing attitude of the children and the lessening of parental control. The head of the household in this case happened to be a widow. Several grown children, one of them married, were living at home. Because of the ability of the head to speak English, it was unnecessary for the interviewer to use his interpreter. After the usual preliminaries, when the information had been obtained and entered on the schedule, one of the daughters of the head voiced her suspicion of all the questions that were being asked. The interviewer again patiently explained how the information would be used and was finally permitted to leave with his schedule. Throughout the interview the head of the household had made no protest against giving the desired information.

When the interviewer came to the center next day, it appeared that the daughter raising the objections the evening before, together with her sisters, had gone out to other families in the hamlet after the interviewer had left and had created considerable opposition to interviewing in the center. This opposition was removed when the interviewer presented his credentials which, incidentally, had never been called for at any other time. To be sure that there was no ill-feeling in the household where the trouble had started, the interviewer returned to show his credentials to the head. She flatly refused to look at them and made some comments which illustrate the point that should be brought out. She berated her daughters, who were present, for taking the attitude they did and said, "I knew from the first that you were all right and that the information which you were getting would not be used against us. It seems smart these days for girls to know more than their mother and for them to tell their mother what to do. It was

my daughter and not I that doubted you. I don't think it is smart but they seem to think so. Maybe this will make them realize that their mother is not as dumb as they seem to think."

It is the sort of attitude taken by the daughters in the above case and the remarks of the mother that give indication of a lessening of parental control. The decline in parental control is but one manifestation of the effect of social changes on family life among the Spanish-Americans in the small rural centers.

### EDUCATIONAL PROCESSES

In the preceding chapter the educational status of the residents of the eight villages and hamlets was found to be low. This is but an objective manifestation of underlying educational problems growing out of the presence of a large number of Spanish-Americans in the total population. Because of these problems an unfavorable attitude toward education on the part of the Spanish-Americans exists and has had an adverse influence on social organization.

#### *The System of Education*

It is not possible to understand the importance of the educational processes in the centers studied without a knowledge of the educational system of Doña Ana County. It was pointed out in a previous chapter that the rural schools have been located arbitrarily because such location fits into the administrative plan of the county rural elementary school system. The majority of the elementary schools in the county are consolidated schools with more than one teacher. As a result of consolidation, the schools have been placed considerable distances apart and some centers have no school. Children from these centers are transported by bus to the nearest school. The arbitrary location of the schools in many cases has tended to prevent them from being thought of as local institutions. Even where a school is located in a center it may not serve as a binding factor in the minds of the inhabitants, partly because of a failure to understand clearly the importance of education, but also because the school serves more than one center and

because it has not necessarily been established as a result of a real felt need but has been imposed by authorities from the outside.

Fully as important as the administrative aspects of the school system and the location of the schools is the program of teaching which is carried on. Educational leaders have not been fully able to understand the educational needs of the Spanish-Americans and the problems created by the presence of two divergent cultural groups. The great majority of the teachers in the rural elementary schools are Anglo-Americans. Many of them lack insight into the special problems arising out of the cultural situation and some of those who do have some understanding of the problems involved are handicapped by administrative regulations which hinder a teaching program adapted to the situation.

Education of Spanish-American children presents problems quite different from those existing for the Anglo-American children. The Spanish-American children have a different cultural background, and as a consequence much of what is taught in the schools is difficult for them to understand and appreciate. This difficulty is accentuated through language difference. The Spanish-American children, in most instances, have to learn English after they get to school and this is a handicap in their learning process, especially since the use of Spanish is not permitted in the school room.<sup>18</sup>

Available information indicates that in Doña Ana County the rural schools, as yet, have not provided effectively for the educational needs of the Spanish-American children. Of this there can be little doubt. A glimpse into the life in the Spanish-American villages and hamlets included in this study shows how lacking the educational program has been. There is recognition, by educational leaders, of the shortcomings of the educational program as it relates to the Spanish-Americans, and efforts are continually being made to improve the standards and to increase the effectiveness of the schools. However, the leaders have been handicapped, in part by the lack of sufficient

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<sup>18</sup> Regulations require that Spanish shall not be spoken on the playground, but this rule has not been and cannot be enforced.

funds, in part by political interference, and in part by opposition of the children and their parents. Yet progress is being made and the future may see the educational program of the county greatly improved, with the consequent beneficial results. Obstacles will continue to come for a considerable time because of the presence of two divergent cultural groups. Certainly no real improvement will be possible until full recognition is taken of the difference in the cultural background of the Spanish-Americans and the Anglo-Americans and of the language difficulties which exist.

### *Attitude Toward Education*

Educational problems, as they apply to the Spanish-Americans, become more difficult because of a lack of understanding on the part of this group as to why education is needed and why it is of value. Most of the Spanish-American children come from an economic and social class where many of the older people have had little or no formal education. Such a lack of education does not appear to either parents or children as having been any particular hindrance. Most of these people are engaged in activities which require little enlightenment of the sort which is given in the schools. Furthermore, in the light of limited opportunities in other lines of endeavor, the values of an education do not seem great to members of this cultural group. Economic security is of greatest concern, and the people have failed to see how formal education has been able to help in this respect. This sort of attitude has carried over to the children, and while these attend school they have retained some of this attitude. Unfortunately, the teaching program has not been of a nature to impress upon the children the values of an education in its wider aspects. Economic problems still are considered most important to the Spanish-Americans. Not much thought is given to the value of education obtained from the standpoint of preparing the individual for his place in society. Again it is a problem of modifying the influence of the cultural background out of which the Spanish-American children come. Until they fully appreciate that they will better be able to make adjustments in their social relationships through



education, they will continue to show an apathy toward educational opportunities.

The indifference towards school is seen from the fact that some of the children of school age are not enrolled in school. It is difficult to obtain accurate data on the proportion of children not enrolled. A school census is taken annually, but in such a manner that no exact, detailed information on the matter can be obtained. Still, the school census data show that a considerable proportion of the Spanish-American children of school age in the rural areas are not enrolled in the elementary schools. County school officials and school teachers admit this to be the case. The county school superintendent stated to the writer that even if it were possible to force the children who are not enrolled in school, many of the Spanish-American children are so undernourished and poorly clothed that effective schooling would be almost impossible.

It is not only the fact that not all the children of school age are enrolled that presents a problem, but also the fact that attendance is low and irregular. This is true for Anglo-American as well as for Spanish-American children. For the Spanish-American children enrolled in the rural elementary schools of the county, the average daily absences during 1938-1939 in the eight elementary grades ranged from 20.8 per cent in the eighth grade to 31.5 per cent in the second grade. The percentage of absences was somewhat lower in the first grade than in the second grade, but beginning with the second grade the percentage of absences declined as the grade increased. This is explained by the tendency of the children not attending regularly to drop out altogether as they approach the higher grades.<sup>19</sup>

It would appear that a situation in which a high proportion of the children of school age are not enrolled and in which attendance is low and irregular must of necessity fail to provide adequate educational opportunities for the groups of people in question. The result of the condition which has been described above is reflected in the educational retardation shown in Table

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<sup>19</sup> The negative attitude of the Spanish-Americans toward education is seen also in the small proportion of children attending high school. See page 67.

14 of this study. Furthermore, it must be remembered that even the low degree of educational attainment achieved by the children of the centers studied is not fully utilized, in part because of the inability of the schools to see the special problems of this group and also because of the consequent failure of the children to realize the connection between their learning and the problems which they must face.

### *Relation to Social Organization*

The shortcomings of the educational system and the attitude toward education in the centers studied have affected social organization in these centers. Education has not been successful in making the residents understand their problems. Consequently, new adjustments have not been facilitated. Because of the lack of effective educational forces the family and the church have retained a greater measure of social control.

In spite of contacts and knowledge gained in the schools, antagonism between the Spanish-Americans and Anglo-Americans continues. The conflict process which is discussed in a subsequent section is related to this antagonism. In most of the schools there are both Anglo-American and Spanish-American children, but association between the children of these two cultural groups ceases upon departure from the school grounds. In other words, school contacts have not served to break down the barriers between the two groups. This situation is accentuated by the persistent use of the Spanish language by the Spanish-Americans among themselves outside the school room. As a result of the continued opposition of the two groups, the Spanish-Americans seek to identify themselves with members of their own cultural group and especially those residing in their own center. At the same time disintegrative forces in the centers are fostered because of the failure of education to create an awareness and understanding of the problems growing out of social changes and to aid in a solution of those problems. Undoubtedly, before necessary adjustments can be made by the inhabitants of the centers studied, it will be necessary for education to play a more vital part in shaping the attitudes of these people.

## THE ROLE OF RELIGION

The church plays an important role among the Spanish-American people. Next to the family it is the most important social institution. The majority of the Spanish-Americans are Catholics, and in only one of the eight centers studied did any of the Spanish-Americans belong to any other denomination than the Catholic. In the village of Doña Ana there is a group of Spanish Methodists.

It has been characteristic of the Spanish-American villages and hamlets of the Southwest that a Catholic church was built soon after the centers had become definitely established. This was the case in at least four of the eight centers studied. These four centers still have a Catholic church. In addition, in one of the villages a former schoolhouse has been turned into a Catholic chapel, and in the other village, Doña Ana, there is a Spanish-Methodist church.

The physical equipment of the churches is very inadequate. All of the four Catholic churches and the Catholic chapel are adobe structures which have deteriorated considerably. Equipment inside the churches is very limited. Undoubtedly, lack of funds has been the primary factor in the failure to build and maintain better church structures and to provide better equipment in general. It must be remembered, however, that the population residing in the villages and hamlets are of such low economic status that their income does not permit any great contribution to the support of religious activities. Even so, the contributions are large in the light of what these people are able to afford. It is a tribute to their religious perseverance that they have been able to provide some sort of facilities for their organized religious activity.

Only one of the five centers with church buildings has a resident pastor.<sup>20</sup> There is a resident pastor in Rodey who also conducts services in the chapel in Placitas and at several other nearby centers. Services in the churches in Berino and Chamberino are conducted by the Catholic priest in Anthony, and

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<sup>20</sup> Nearly three-fifths of the rural churches of Doña Ana County are without a resident pastor.

in Doña Ana services are conducted in both churches by non-resident pastors from Las Cruces.

### *The Influence of the Church*

In spite of the lack of church buildings in a number of the centers, in spite of the lack of adequate church equipment, and in spite of the lack of resident pastors except in one instance, the church exerts a strong influence on the Spanish-American people of the centers. Religion holds a very prominent place in the lives of these people, and this applies to the young people as well as to the old.

The influence of the Catholic Church, to a large extent, is due to the cultural background of the Spanish-Americans. The Catholic Church for several centuries grew and prospered in Mexico and became a dominant institution. When settlers from Mexico came to what is now New Mexico they brought with them their Catholic faith, and the Catholic Church continued to be a dominant social institution. The control imposed by the Catholic Church in itself enhanced the continuation of religious influence. Coupled with this has been an element of superstition which grew out of the Indian background of these people.

Another factor that has kept up the dominance of the church has been the activity of the Catholic clergy. They have made every effort to keep alive the Catholic Church and to maintain adherence of the Spanish-Americans to the Catholic faith.

The religious factor has continued to be a strong element in the lives of the Spanish-Americans because the church has served as a social bond to keep the people together. In the face of social changes that have tended to disrupt the mode of living and to endanger economic security, the church has been the one place for many of these people to seek aid in their difficulties. The church has assumed and still assumes such an important place among the Spanish-Americans in the centers because of the relative lack of other bonds of solidarity.

The influence of the Catholic Church in the centers is seen in a number of ways. Religious convictions have served as

means of social control. The Catholic Church has given sanction to the mores that have already become rooted in the culture of the group. In no instance is the influence of the church more clearly illustrated than with respect to the important place which children occupy among the Spanish-Americans. The average number of children born to each family in the eight centers is large. This is the situation in spite of the inability of the parents to give their children even minimum opportunities and advantages. The infant mortality rate is very high largely because economic status does not permit the care necessary for survival but also because of the persistence of old habits and superstitions which have prevented adequate child care. For those who do survive little can be offered in the way of advantages while they are at home, and few opportunities exist when adulthood is reached. In spite of such a situation large families still are the rule. This emphasis on children is to a large degree the result of the religious teachings of the Catholic Church and is a good illustration of the control which this institution exerts on the inhabitants of the centers.

While the Catholic Church is an important agency of social control, there is some evidence that it is becoming less effective in this respect so far as the younger people are concerned. As in the case of the family, this changing influence has been the result of the breakdown of isolation with the accompanying new social contacts. The church will, no doubt, continue to play an important role in the centers studied, but it will probably be a less important role than it has held in the past.

### *Social Aspects of Religious Behavior*

The church is also of importance to the Spanish-American residents because it is through the church that the only real organized sociability takes place. This, in part, takes the form of religious plays or pageants, particularly during Christmas. Two of the most common ceremonies are the *posada* and the *pastores*. The former consists of an arrangement whereby nine families go to one another's houses for nine nights before Christmas and enact a religious story. After the story is portrayed, refreshments are served and the people visit with each

other. The other custom is also the enactment of a religious play, beginning Christmas eve and continuing intermittently for several days. Both customs are group efforts and in both instances sociability and religious expression are combined.

More important than either the *posada* or the *pastores* are the annual religious festivals conducted in some of the centers as a part of the program of the Catholic Church. Most of the villages and hamlets have a patron saint, and a certain day is set aside each year in honor of this saint. It is a day of celebration. The ceremonies vary somewhat for the different centers but there is some uniformity running through all of the festivals. A brief description may be given here of such a festival in one of the locality groups in Doña Ana County. This locality group is not included among the eight villages and hamlets with which this study deals, but this particular festival is described because the writer has more accurate knowledge of it than of some of the other festivals. He had an excellent opportunity to observe it closely. On the day of the festival there was mass at the Catholic Church in the morning. After mass a procession of the people wound its way through the village and along the irrigation ditches past the fields. The procession out to the fields was primarily for the purpose of blessing the crops. In the procession some of the more important members of the Church carried a small image of the patron saint enclosed in a shrine. As the procession moved along, choir girls scattered bits of colored paper on the road. The children's choir, attired in robes, sang religious compositions. Part of the time a small band, consisting of three instruments, played. Here was an interesting illustration of cultural diffusion. The two favorite tunes played were Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever" and the "Paul Jones"—a dance melody. At frequent intervals the priests offered prayers. During the entire procession a number of individuals walked along in the fields at some distance and shot off large fire-crackers, supposedly for the purpose of driving off evil spirits. After the return of the procession, the group disbanded, but in most instances there is a *baille*, or dance, in the evening.

Altogether the days of the patron saints are *fiesta* days. The church is decorated and people come dressed in their best.

Most of the people cease working for the day, although the custom is now losing its hold to such an extent that some of the men return to their work in the afternoon. Yet even today these festivals occupy an important place in the lives of the Spanish-Americans. They are a medium through which sociability is possible, but they are much more than that. Their sociological significance to a large degree lies in the fact that here is an activity around which the entire population of the center can gather and an activity which is carried on through group effort. Added significance is found in the ability of the Catholic Church to use these festivals as means of relating sociability to religious activity.

Not all the Spanish-American villages and hamlets have these festivals, but in some of the centers where they do not exist it is customary for some of the people to attend the annual festival in some center where there is one. The religious bond in this manner tends to reach out to join individuals living in separate centers.

### CO-OPERATION

Brief mention should be made of the role which coöperation plays in the social organization of the Spanish-American centers. It is not a form of interaction which plays a prominent part, but there are, nevertheless, instances in which it is important.

Coöperation in the centers is strongest within the larger family group, called the "great family" in a previous section. In this group it relates to the family solidarity which was discussed above. One of the best illustrations is seen in the dwelling arrangements which exist where the married children build their homes on the family lot. Not only is there coöperation in this respect but also in the actual construction of the dwellings. Another illustration may be taken from one of the "great families" included in the study. The writer was informed that the different related households in the larger family group coöperated with each other in a period of need or crisis. For example, the head of one of the households was taken seriously ill. He was unable to pay for the necessary medical attention;

so a brother, a son, and several nephews, heads of separate households, all contributed toward meeting the expense. Numerous instances of such coöperation within the larger family groups are to be found.

Coöperation is less evident outside the family group. There is very little organized effort. This situation is partly the result of the mode of living in these centers. The absence of public facilities such as fire protection and sewage disposal is a factor in limiting coöperation.

Irrigation is no longer a coöperative enterprise. Yet there are areas of activity where the centers could obtain desirable advantages through coöperative effort such as, for example, securing a more adequate water supply or developing a community garden on some nearby irrigated area. Such enterprises would be of considerable value to the inhabitants.

One explanation of the relative lack of coöperation outside the family group may lie in the degree of family solidarity which has been shown to exist. Family ties have tended to center attention on the needs and the interests of the family and not on those of people outside the family circle. Thus, in order to promote coöperation in the interests of the welfare of a center, it will be necessary to find a way whereby the interests of the family group can tie in with what will be of mutual value to the population of the center as a whole.

The lack of coöperation outside the family group compared to that which exists within the family does not mean that the inhabitants of the centers do not coöperate with each other irrespective of family ties. Some degree of coöperation does prevail even if not in the interest of group welfare as a whole. There is a considerable amount of neighborliness. This neighborliness goes beyond sociability and extends to mutual helpfulness. Under the type of agricultural economy in which the Spanish-American villages exist there is not much opportunity for an exchange of work, but other forms of mutual exchange of help exist. One Anglo-American individual well acquainted with Spanish-Americans and some of their habits informed the writer that no one starves in a village or hamlet so long as anyone has a few beans or a little corn meal. This statement, of course, has to be interpreted in the light of the standard of



living of the Spanish-Americans, but it does illustrate a degree of mutual helpfulness. It is not a case of charity but a case of coöperation in the face of need.

## CONFLICT

Of the social-cultural processes which determine social organization in the Spanish-American villages and hamlets, one of the most important is conflict. Not only is it a form of interaction that operates in these locality groups, but it is also a process that operates over a much wider area. The presence of such a large proportion of Spanish-Americans as is found in New Mexico has brought about a clash of individuals and groups in the struggle for a place in society. This opposition extends down into the local situations and has played a distinctive part in setting up the form of social organization which prevails.

### *Historical Developments as a Basis for Conflict*

In order to understand the conflict situations which exist in the selected Spanish-American villages and hamlets, it is necessary to refer again to some of the historical developments which have taken place in New Mexico and in Doña Ana County. The Spanish-Americans are not a people who have only recently found a place in the area. Instead, they can look back on a long period of settlement and to a time when they were the dominant group. This dominance was of both a political and a social nature. Politically, the Spanish-Americans were in control for several decades after New Mexico was acquired by the United States. This control extended to the local areas. Gradually, the Anglo-Americans have usurped the political power and influence of the Spanish-Americans; and while the latter group is still influential politically, this influence is no longer a dominating one.

Similarly, the Spanish-Americans do not occupy the prominent social position in the life of the State that they formerly did. The days when the social status of these people, as a group, ranked high are gone. At the time when the Spanish-

Americans constituted the great majority of the population, they set the social standards. Today it is the Anglo-Americans that set them. It is the knowledge of the loss of this social prestige as well as of political prestige that has tended to intensify conflict among the two major cultural groups.

The antagonism between the two groups has been aggravated further by the change in economic status of the Spanish-Americans as a result of the agricultural changes which have been discussed previously. The loss of their lands, the disappearance of their self-sufficiency, and the restriction of work opportunities all have helped to create a situation which has fostered opposition. Out of this whole situation has developed a feeling among the Spanish-Americans that they are a subject people.

### *The Role of a Subject People*

The position of the Spanish-Americans is made more difficult because of the attitude of the Anglo-Americans toward them. The latter, regardless of their own status, as a whole, consider the former to be inferior. The presence of the Spanish-Americans is regarded as an unavoidable situation and something which must be accepted as a necessary evil. Because of the attitude of superiority on the part of the Anglo-Americans, they have taken the stand that it is not necessary to give much consideration to the needs of the other cultural group and that the members of this group, because of their inferiority, have only a limited right to make any demands. This is evident in political, educational, and economic matters. It is particularly seen with respect to economic factors. The Spanish-American laborers receive very low wages and Anglo-American farmers are not in the least concerned with the fact that the wages which they pay cannot support the worker and his family except on a starvation level.

The low economic, social, and political status of the Spanish-Americans, as well as the attitudes of the Anglo-Americans, has created among the former the feeling that they are a subject people and not a people with the same rights and opportunities that are accorded to the Anglo-Americans. An attitude of op-

pression prevails among the Spanish-Americans, and as a result they have developed an inferiority complex, although they may not be willing to admit that this is the case.

The view of the Spanish-Americans as a subject people was emphatically expressed by a member of their own group who spoke at a public forum on educational problems in New Mexico. The discussion turned to the subject of the failure of the schools to meet the educational problems growing out of the presence of a large number of Spanish-Americans. The question was raised as to how educational problems had been solved in areas in the United States where the foreign-born element was large and whether the methods used in such areas could not be applied to the Spanish-American areas in New Mexico. The Spanish-American speaker, a well-known educational authority in the State, took the position that such methods could not apply to the Spanish-American areas in New Mexico because the Spanish-Americans are a people who reside in the area through conquest and not through choice.

A question might be raised as to whether the Spanish-Americans are in a position different from that in which the Indians and Negroes in the United States find themselves. The situations are not the same. The Indians, and the Negroes to a lesser degree, are segregated from the rest of the population and special forms of accommodation have developed. On the other hand, the Spanish-Americans are not as segregated but have to fit into the existing wider social framework of the areas in which they are concentrated.

The position of the Spanish-Americans as a subject people has been made more difficult because it has not been possible for them to make adjustments that have been made by other groups that have found themselves in situations which no longer provided adequate opportunities. Good illustrations are the westward and the cityward movements of rural people in the United States in the past. Another illustration is the migratory-labor movement. In these cases people have left the areas in which they no longer were able to make the adjustments which they deemed essential to their welfare. Such a solution has not existed for the Spanish-Americans in rural areas of New Mexico, partly because family ties have kept them in the

areas in which they reside and partly because the opportunities elsewhere which have been available to the migrating groups have not been available to them. As a consequence, the Spanish-Americans have not dispersed but have remained in the areas which they originally settled even though they there find themselves playing the role of a subject people.

### *Aggressive Tendencies*

The opposition between the Spanish-Americans and the Anglo-Americans and the insistence of the former on equality with the latter, in spite of an attitude of inferiority, have resulted in certain aggressive tendencies by the Spanish-Americans. An impartial observer gets the impression that there is a little too much protest as to this equality on the part of a group which feels that it is not inferior. Every opportunity is used to remove any indication that the group is any different from the Anglo-Americans. This is noticed particularly in the demand on the part of the Spanish-Americans for the same recognition for members of their group as for the Anglo-Americans. Such demands are not necessarily met but this has not kept the demands from being made. These demands have been presented both with reference to local situations in the county and to state-wide affairs.

### *Conflict as a Binding Factor*

The conflict situations growing out of the wider aspects of opposition between the Spanish-Americans and the Anglo-Americans have extended to local groups such as are studied here. This local opposition may be either between the Spanish-Americans and the Anglo-Americans in the centers or between the Spanish-Americans in the centers and the Anglo-Americans as a group regardless of whether or not they live in the centers. The first of these two forms is, of course, not present in the three centers with no Anglo-American population. In the other five centers, conflict between the two groups has gradually been giving way to accommodation. Yet the antagonism still is evident in many instances. In none of the villages studied was there much association between the Spanish-Americans and

the Anglo-Americans, even though the latter were of an economic status that was very similar to that of the former.

It is between the Spanish-Americans in the centers and the Anglo-American group as a whole that conflict is most evident. This opposition has resulted from the attitudes which were discussed above. It is manifested in the suspicion with which an Anglo-American is viewed by residents of the centers. In this study, Spanish-American interpreters were used, not solely because of the inability of the interviewers to speak and understand enough Spanish, but also because without the presence of a Spanish-American helper the interview would in most cases not have been granted. Even so, difficulties were often encountered because of the suspicion that an Anglo-American would want information that would be detrimental to the Spanish-Americans. Time and again the interviewers were questioned as to whether they also had interviewed the Anglo-American families. In several instances they were asked why they took only Spanish-American centers and not those with more Anglo-Americans.

The conflict situations which have developed between the Spanish-Americans and Anglo-Americans have been the fault of both groups. Neither group has made a determined effort to understand the other nor to understand the forces which have brought about the conflict situations. As a result in-group and out-group attitudes have come to play an important part in the interactional patterns which exist in the centers. For the Spanish-Americans these attitudes have tended to solidify group consciousness and as such have served to continue the type of social organization which prevails.

### ACCOMMODATION

Conflict is intermittent. Contending groups cannot continue to struggle against each other. Some sort of adjustment is therefore made as a means of getting along together. Such working relations may take one of several forms. It may take the form of accommodation under which the identity of the contending groups is not lost. It may also take the form of

assimilation by which the cultures of the two groups are fused. Or it may take the form of amalgamation of the divergent groups, which in itself enhances the possibility of assimilation.

In the area and in the selected Spanish-American localities with which this study is concerned, it is the first of these three forms of adjustment which has taken place. Conflict between the Spanish-American and the Anglo-American culture groups, to a considerable degree, has given way to accommodation. This adjustment is in part a condition and in part a process. Each of the two groups recognizes the separate identity of the other. Many of the culture traits of each group have been retained.

Accommodation is a form of adjustment which has resulted from changes that have taken place over a period of years. At the time that most of the centers started, the majority of the inhabitants of the area were Spanish-Americans, and conflict situations which later arose had not developed. With the absence of these conflict situations there was no need for accommodation as a means of adjustment. The coming of the Anglo-Americans brought a group of people with a divergent culture and, because of the opposition which developed between the two cultural groups, some form of adjustment became necessary.

Adjustment has taken place in the form of accommodation. The subject-people role discussed in the preceding section has been instrumental in bringing about a concentration of the Spanish-Americans in the villages and hamlets of the area. The failure of assimilation and amalgamation to take place has furthered the cultural divergence of the Spanish-Americans, and because of their minority role they have continued to segregate themselves. Absence of visible opportunities for advancement has created an attitude of fatalism which has made living in their small centers seem the only satisfactory way of accommodating themselves to the social situation.

The process of accommodation as a form of interaction in the selected villages and hamlets has served to increase identification of the individuals with the group. Submission to the more dominant Anglo-American group has created a common bond among the Spanish-Americans. Group identification has

been accentuated by a common language and other common cultural characteristics. Local unity growing out of the accommodative process, however, has been limited to unity on a geographic basis.

The question might be raised as to whether accommodation has been a step toward assimilation and amalgamation as has been the case in other divergent cultural groups in the United States. The answer, as far as these New Mexican centers are concerned, is no. There has been a mutual acceptance on the part of both Spanish-Americans and Anglo-Americans of culture traits of the opposite group but not in a sufficient degree to permit our saying that assimilation has taken place. Nor has there been amalgamation. Inter-marriage between the Spanish-Americans and the Anglo-Americans has been very limited. This is seen from the fact that in the eight villages and hamlets none of the heads of the households were married to persons of the other cultural group. For the present, accommodation is the first step which has been made toward adjustment of relations between the Spanish-Americans and the Anglo-Americans. It does not necessarily follow that assimilation will be the next step. Accommodation as it has developed is rather a solution in the form of avoidance.

### DISINTEGRATION

Some of the preceding sections of this chapter have dealt with a number of factors which have served to act as integrating forces in the social organization of the eight selected villages and hamlets. Association, family relationships, religion, coöperation, and accommodation have all been shown to be important in this respect. In spite of these integrating forces, disintegration is evident in most of the centers. A number of factors have fostered the process of disintegration.

#### *Influence of Outside Factors*

The changing economy, which has been mentioned frequently, has been shown to be important in determining the type of social organization in the centers. This same changing

economy, however, also has served to be a disintegrating force in the group life of the villages and hamlets. Declining self-sufficiency and lack of economic security have weakened the ties which have bound the residents to the centers and which have made for group solidarity. Lowered economic status has not permitted the type of living which would bring integrative forces into play.

Another factor, outside the centers, which has fostered disintegration has been the program of public assistance which has developed in Doña Ana County. A new attitude of dependence outside the group has come to exist. This attitude is indirectly an outgrowth of changed economic and social conditions. In the days when a self-sufficient economy prevailed among the Spanish-Americans most of them were able to satisfy their own needs. Even where this was not the case the problem was one which could be solved without depending on aid outside the cultural group. The old *patron-peon* complex was an arrangement under which the needs of the people not able to provide fully for themselves could be taken care of. The agricultural changes which took place created a different situation. It became necessary to obtain public assistance. This situation was aggravated by the unfavorable economic conditions growing out of the depression of the 1930's. An emergency relief program was initiated in Doña Ana County as in other parts of the United States, and it became possible for the needy residents of the villages and hamlets to obtain public assistance. These people were no longer entirely dependent on their own efforts, because of the availability of this help.

The aid obtained through public assistance was an absolute necessity for many under the circumstances, and still is, but a serious problem has arisen out of the situation. Better economic conditions in the county in recent years have not removed the dependence on public assistance which emergency conditions brought about. In some instances this dependence has not been avoidable but in many other instances it has. Relief has come to be an expected right, and people who were once self-supporting continue to seek aid from public agencies even though they may no longer be facing the crisis which originally necessitated obtaining aid from public sources. For example, the inter-



viewers on this study were continually confronted with the question as to whether they were from the "Welfare Office" or the "WPA Office." A number of interviewees took advantage of the interview either to express their dire need or to direct criticism against the relief agencies for not looking after their needs.

The whole problem of public assistance in Doña Ana County, as in other parts of New Mexico where there is a large proportion of Spanish-Americans, has been complicated by the fact that there are the two cultural groups. These two groups are not on the same economic level. The standard of living, at least in its physiological aspects, has been very low for the Spanish-American groups. As a consequence, in the past a relatively low income has sufficed to meet their most primary needs. With the coming of public assistance, many of them suddenly found themselves obtaining aid which amounted to considerably more than they ever had been able to earn previously. The result has been an indifference to work opportunities which earlier would have been accepted gladly. On the other hand, it has not been possible to make a differentiation in the aid extended to members of the two cultural groups. The Spanish-Americans in New Mexico are sufficiently strong politically to prevent any such policy, even if it were ethically justifiable. The sudden increase in income from relief sources has affected the habits and ideas of the people in question to an extent that support through public agencies has come to be expected. Under any circumstances such assistance has fostered a feeling of dependence among the residents in the Spanish-American villages and hamlets on groups other than their own and in this respect has served to act as a disintegrating force.

A third influence from the outside, tending to foster disintegration, is the infiltration of new ideas. In spite of the isolation which has existed in the past and to some extent still exists, social contacts have multiplied. New ideas and attitudes that have come into the centers have created new wants and desires but have brought no knowledge of how to increase economic returns in order to be able to satisfy these new wants and desires. Dissatisfaction, on the part of the young people

particularly, has been the result. This dissatisfaction has hurried the process of disintegration.

### *Breakdown of Family Mores*

The social changes which have taken place have not only brought about dissatisfaction because of the inability to satisfy new wants and desires. They have also resulted in the changes in family life discussed in an earlier section. Family mores are less powerful as a means of social control than formerly. Family solidarity is decreasing. Lack of parental control and dissatisfaction with prevailing conditions have developed too rapidly for adaptations to take place, and disintegration has started. The only reason that group solidarity has remained as strong as it has and that more people, especially young people, have not left the centers has been the fact that better opportunities do not seem to present themselves elsewhere.

### *Decline of Sociability and Recreation*

The importance of sociability among the Spanish-Americans has been discussed in some detail. In spite of the present importance of sociability to this cultural group, there is evidence that it is less prevalent now than in the past. Furthermore, sociability and recreational activities take place outside the centers more than once was the case. Commercial recreation in nearby larger centers has attracted the young people, and the decline of isolation has increased the opportunities for associating with others outside the locality groups.

The decline of sociability and recreation in the centers may be illustrated by an instance from one of the hamlets studied. One of the oldest inhabitants in the center spoke with considerable feeling and wistfulness of the old days in the center. Then the people were a happy group. There was an atmosphere of congeniality which the old informant felt had disappeared entirely. Fiesta days and market days were days of joviality. The cowboys would come in from the range. Sometimes there would be fighting, but that just seemed to add to the joy of living. All of these activities served to make for unity. Today they are largely gone from the centers and their disappearance

has been another disintegrating factor. The villages and hamlets are without much of the former cultural activity which served as an integrative force.

### *Declining Importance of the Centers*

A final factor tending to foster disintegration in the villages and hamlets has been their declining importance. It has been shown in previous sections that the needs of the inhabitants are largely met outside the centers. Because of this situation the centers no longer play as important a part in the lives of the inhabitants as they once did. Economic agencies have never been numerous in any of the centers, but nevertheless in the past they have been more important than is now the case. The church is the only one of the institutions or agencies still playing a prominent part in the lives of the residents. The centers no longer are the scenes of much activity. This decline in the importance of the centers has unavoidably given momentum to the process of disintegration already brought about by the other factors that have been mentioned.

An attempt has now been made to discover the nature of rural social organization in a Spanish-American area in New Mexico and to ascertain the role of social-cultural processes in determining this social organization. The social structure of Doña Ana County has been shown, descriptions of selected villages and hamlets and of some of the characteristics of the people in these centers as well as their conditions of living have been given, and a number of social-cultural processes have been discussed. It will be appropriate to conclude with a short chapter summarizing briefly some of the more important findings of the study and setting forth some implications with regard to the future prospects of the people that have been studied.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

That region of the United States known as the Southwest presents a peculiar cultural situation, in that large parts of the region are characterized by the presence of two major cultural groups, namely, the Anglo-American and the Spanish-American. New Mexico is a part of this region, and in this State the influence of the Spanish-American cultural group is felt more strongly than in any of the other states of the region. Nearly half of the people of the State are Spanish-Americans, living mostly in the river valleys, especially along the Río Grande and its tributaries. These people have a long cultural history which has affected the social structure and social interaction of the areas in which they reside.

Doña Ana County is one of the counties in New Mexico with a large proportion of Spanish-Americans. It is located in the southern part of the State and is traversed from northwest to southeast by the Río Grande. The river valley is bounded on each side by sparsely vegetated mesas. Because of the lack of adequate rainfall, agriculture is limited to a narrow strip of land under irrigation along the river. Cotton is the most important crop in the county, and the farm economy is built largely around this one crop, although other crops are also important.

The population of the county is preponderantly rural and is concentrated in the irrigated area or at its edge. Nearly two-thirds of the total population is estimated to consist of Spanish-Americans, and the great majority of the remainder are Anglo-Americans.

A number of different types of locality groups are present in the county. The population centers include one city with 8,385 people, one incorporated village, ten unincorporated villages, and fifteen hamlets. All of these centers, with the exception of one small hamlet, are located within the three community areas of the county. Six of the hamlets are the nuclei of hamlet neighborhoods. In the three community areas there

are also six open-country neighborhoods. One open-country neighborhood is located outside the community areas. Five of the villages and six of the hamlets have little or no surrounding open-country population. These centers are located on the mesas at the edge of the irrigated area. The major portion of this study has dealt with two of the villages and all of the hamlets in this group.

The eight selected centers lack some or all of the institutions and agencies essential to meet even minimum needs. As a consequence, it is necessary for the inhabitants of these centers to look to other centers for many of their services. The relative lack of agencies and institutions has had an important consequence in that it has eliminated a basis for common interests and activities on the part of the inhabitants.

The population of the selected centers is predominantly Spanish-American. In general, the age and sex distribution of the population is quite similar to the age and sex distribution of the population of Doña Ana County as a whole. The marital status of the population is very nearly the same as that of the population of New Mexico. Most of the inhabitants of the centers are of low educational status. More than half of all the household heads are on some step of the agricultural ladder, and more than one-third are farm laborers.

The majority of the people in the eight selected villages and hamlets live in adobe structures. Most of the dwellings are small in relation to the number of persons that reside in them. Ownership is the most frequent type of tenure. As a rule, the houses are poorly equipped with respect to heating, lighting, and sanitary facilities. Means of transportation and communication facilities are limited in all the centers.

Spanish-American residents in the centers are not characterized by a high degree of mobility. Judged by the average length of residence, the heads of the households have tended to stay in the centers instead of moving away. The majority of the heads have always lived in the centers in which they now reside or have come to the centers from relatively short distances within the county. Children not living at the home of their parents have tended either to stay in the centers or to move to some nearby locality in the county.

A large proportion of the inhabitants of the villages and hamlets are related to each other. The existing high degree of family interrelationships has served to increase family solidarity, to keep a large proportion of the population in the centers, and to serve as a basis for sociability. It is largely through the family that social control operates, although the church also occupies an important place in social control. Outside contacts and the breakdown of isolation, however, have served to lessen the hold of the family and the church on the young people.

Social interaction in the centers has been influenced to a considerable degree by the changing agricultural economy in the county. Agricultural changes disrupted the self-sufficient economy which prevailed earlier. A large proportion of Spanish-American farmers lost their land and, as a result, many of them became members of the agricultural-worker class with a lowered economic status. Some of them moved to the small villages and hamlets in the area.

It is not necessary to repeat here all the pertinent facts dealing with the social-cultural processes determining social organization in the area studied. Some have already been referred to indirectly in the preceding paragraphs. A few of the processes, however, should be mentioned at this point.

Coöperation is not a form of interaction which plays a prominent part in the Spanish-American villages and hamlets. It is more evident within the larger family groups than it is in the centers as a whole. On the other hand, conflict is a process which operates both in the centers and in the wider area. Conflict situations have arisen out of the presence of two major cultural groups and out of the historical developments which have taken place. The position of the Spanish-Americans is that of a subject people. This role has led to aggressive tendencies on their part to offset an attitude of inferiority. Where conflict has been present it often has acted as a binding factor among the Spanish-Americans. At the same time, it has given way to accommodation to quite an extent. Accommodation is a form of adjustment which became necessary because of the coming of the Anglo-Americans and their rise to a dominating position. This process has served to increase the identification of the Spanish-Americans in the villages and hamlets with their

cultural group. So far accommodation has not been a step towards assimilation and amalgamation.

The process of disintegration is evident in most of the centers. Disintegration has been fostered by a number of factors from outside the centers. One of these has been the changing agricultural economy which has brought economic insecurity. Another has been the program of public assistance which has developed and which has created an attitude of dependence. Finally, the infiltration of new ideas from the outside has weakened the agencies of social control. Besides these three outside factors, a number of factors within the centers themselves have been instrumental in furthering the process of disintegration. These are the breakdown of family mores, the decrease in sociability and recreation, and the declining importance of the centers. Both the forces from without and within the centers have given momentum to the disintegrative process.

The social-cultural processes which have been discussed have their roots in the culture of the area. The cultural situation in turn is the outgrowth of historical developments over a period of nearly a century. The earlier exclusive dominance of the Spanish-Americans and the later arrival of the Anglo-Americans have given rise to an interplay of forces which are related to the social organization of the centers studied.

These social-cultural processes are the dynamic aspect of the social situation in the area. They are the forces which have shaped social organization in the villages and hamlets. The processes of interaction between the Spanish-American and Anglo-American groups and between the members of these groups have resulted in the modification of the behavior of the participants to the end that the prevailing form of social organization has come into being. Social organization in the villages and hamlets is not a static condition but rather a part of the process of interaction. Structure and function are both parts of the whole. In the last analysis, one cannot be understood without reference to the other. The processes of interaction reflect the organizational phases of group life. On the other hand, unless the social-cultural processes are given consideration, it is not possible to understand

the nature of the social organization which prevails in the selected villages and hamlets.

In relating the various social-cultural processes to the social organization of the area that has been studied, ample evidence has been found that the position in which the inhabitants of the selected Spanish-American villages and hamlets find themselves is not altogether a happy one. It might be pertinent at this point to raise the question as to what are the prospects for the future of these people. The writer has become intensely interested in the problems which they face and has permitted himself to speculate somewhat on what is to come. It is with something of a feeling of pessimism as to the outcome that he attempts to look into the future of the people that he has studied in considerable detail. Briefly, he sees certain readjustments which will have to take place before it will be possible to effect any improvement in conditions so that better living will be achieved—readjustments which, at the present, do not appear likely to be realized in the near future.

The problem of making the necessary readjustments to meet the changing situation is complicated by the fact that the life of the Spanish-American people represents an adjustment that once functioned without disorganizing effects. For this reason, it is not possible to impose on them a new pattern of behavior which does not take full account of the adjustments that have been made. Unfortunately, the inroads made on the culture of the groups have weakened the framework of readjustment. It has often been contended that a society which has functioned well in the past has within itself the mechanism necessary for readjustments needed as a result of social change, but so violent have been the changes that have occurred that the mechanisms necessary to make new adjustments do not appear to exist in the culture of the Spanish-American people that are included in this study. Unless such mechanisms can be found the possibility of readjustment from within the groups is very limited.

Because of the absence of the necessary mechanisms for readjustment within existing patterns of behavior of the Spanish-Americans, new forces must be brought into play if the problems of these people are to be solved. It appears that two



things are necessary, namely, economic readjustment and an educational program fitted to meet the needs of the Spanish-American people. Each of these may be discussed briefly.

The need for economic readjustment has grown out of the lack of economic security, which has been mentioned time and again in the preceding pages, but which should be mentioned again here because it is as vitally related to what will happen in the future as it has been to what has happened in the past. The Spanish-Americans in the centers have, for the most part, lost any land they ever owned and have become members of the agricultural laboring class. Unfortunately, the mechanization of agriculture that has taken place has lessened the demand for agricultural laborers. Furthermore, the opportunities for employment in occupations other than agriculture are very limited. All of these factors have been instrumental in creating economic insecurity. This insecurity is a problem which must be solved before any satisfactory readjustment can be made.

Apparently, the answer must be found in agriculture if the Spanish-Americans are to continue living in the area where they now reside. No other economic opportunity seems to present itself. Agriculture can provide the solution in two ways. One is a return to some measure of self-sufficiency. This will entail accessibility to land either to a sufficient extent to support a family altogether or enough to permit at least part time farming to be supplemented by income from agricultural labor and, in some instances, from labor in non-agricultural occupations. In either case, a program of education will be needed. It will be necessary for the people to see, first of all, that a self-sufficient economy is an answer, in part at least, to their economic problems, and then to acquire a knowledge of how to make their effort at self sufficiency bring the greatest returns.

A second possible attack upon the economic problems of the group might be through changes in the type of agriculture and agricultural methods to an extent where there would be greater demand for agricultural labor. This course does not seem highly feasible in view of the present trend toward increased mechanization of agriculture. There is little reason to believe that the demand for agricultural labor will increase appreciably; indeed, the opposite seems more probable. Thus,

a return to some measure of self-sufficiency seems the only practical solution.

It may be contended that there is little hope for a return to a self-sufficient economy on the part of the Spanish-Americans located in the centers that have been included in this study. In such an event, the writer sees but one possible course for a great many members of this cultural group, and that is obtaining support through a continuation of the program of public assistance. If it should develop that such a program will be essential for some time to come in order to provide economic security for the people in question, then some revision of relief policy seems imperative. It will be necessary to institute a policy that will not destroy the incentive to seek private employment when such opportunities exist or to take other steps toward removing the dependence on public aid. It is also essential that such a program shall provide a greater differentiation in the amount of public assistance based on the needs of each individual or family than exists at present. Furthermore, any relief policy which attempts to provide assistance through work relief must insure that adequate returns in the form of work are made for the aid received. Unless these problems are taken into consideration, public assistance will continue to be regarded not as a temporary expedient by the people receiving such aid but something which can be expected. At the best, a program of public assistance will only be a means of providing a makeshift solution for a serious problem. It will not aid in solving the conditions which have made for economic and social maladjustment.

It will not be enough, however, that economic readjustments are made that will provide a measure of economic security for the Spanish-Americans in the small villages and hamlets. Such economic security is of paramount importance but it will not solve some of the social maladjustments which exist. In order that there can be readjustment along social lines, educational forces must be brought into play. One of the noticeable aspects of the present situation is the lack of coördination between the schools and community life in the Spanish-American villages and hamlets. Until this situation has been remedied, it does not appear likely that the present unfavorable attitude

of the Spanish-Americans toward education will be changed; and until it is changed, the proper basis for social readjustments will not be possible.

An educational program aimed at greater coördination between the schools and community life in the centers should consider two things. One is the necessity of insight on the part of the educational leaders and teachers concerning the nature of the problems facing the Spanish-Americans. These problems may have arisen out of purely local situations or they may have grown out of a divergent cultural background but in either case they call for special insight and understanding. If the nature of these problems and the necessity of their solution are fully realized, then the first step will have been taken toward making the schools a dynamic force in the group life of the Spanish-Americans. As it now is, the things which are learned at school are not those which are practiced in the Spanish-American groups and education has therefore not operated as an integrative factor in social readjustment. Much could be accomplished in this respect by using the schools as community centers in the villages and hamlets where they are located and by developing a coördinated social and cultural program in connection with such community centers. Another desirable step would be the initiation of an adult educational program aimed at broadening the experience and knowledge of the adults. Such a program might include such activities as handicrafts, sewing, nutrition, health, nursing, and child care.

The other thing to be considered in bringing about greater coördination between the schools and the social life of the Spanish-Americans is that the educational program must give attention not only to the specific problems at hand but also to the possibility of educating these people so that they may be prepared to assume their proper place in the wider society. This can only be done if the value of education from a broader social standpoint is understood more clearly than it is at present. The Spanish-Americans are a part of the population of the area and as such they need to be made aware of their responsibilities as members of society. An educational program making for an awareness of such responsibilities will aid toward an understanding of problems resulting from social

change and will increase the ability to solve these problems.

Emphasis needs to be placed on cultural values which may be obtained from outside the Spanish-American cultural group, as, for example, the desirability of active participation in the affairs of a democratic society and the development of work habits which will help to lessen the problems inherent in the existing economic insecurity. Emphasis should also be given to the cultural values present in the group life of the Spanish-Americans. The members of this group have every reason to feel proud of the Spanish language at the same time that they learn the English language and put it to use. These people can find many other values in their group life which they will do well to perpetuate, as, for instance, the family solidarity which is so evident. Through an emphasis on cultural values both from outside and from within the group, the educational program of the schools will greatly enhance the possibility of preparing the Spanish-American children for making their adjustments in the society in which they live.

The schools may help toward better social adjustment on the part of the Spanish-Americans in another way. To a considerable extent, the position in which these people find themselves is an outgrowth of the opposition which exists between them and the Anglo-Americans. It would be very desirable if this opposition could be removed and assimilation take place. Such a possibility seems quite remote at the present time, but progress could be made through the schools. The older people, both Spanish-American and Anglo-American, have formed attitudes of antagonism which are not easily changed, and the children soon assume these same attitudes. Much could be done, nevertheless, in the schools, toward creating a more desirable attitude of cooperation and understanding so that a more harmonious relationship would prevail between members of the two cultural groups. Such a result could be achieved through a program of teaching which would give attention to language difficulties, to the desirability of extending contacts with members of the divergent cultural group outside the school, and to a better understanding on the part of both Spanish-American and Anglo-American with respect to each other's culture. Whether such an educational program will be developed is a

question, but it would be a desirable step toward making education an important factor in bringing about the readjustments necessary in order that the Spanish-Americans may realize their full potentialities.

In the opinion of the writer, then, economic changes making possible a greater degree of economic security than now exists and a program of education adapted to meet the problems arising out of existing conditions are essential to the future well-being of the Spanish-Americans in the centers included in this study. Such readjustments have become necessary because of the operation of the social-cultural processes discussed in the previous chapter and which were shown to be determining factors in the social organization of the area. These readjustments must grow out of a full appreciation of the cultural setting in which the existing group values have developed. Unless action is taken along these lines, the undesirable position in which the Spanish-Americans in the villages and hamlets now find themselves will be further aggravated and the process of disintegration which is already under way will be intensified to an extent that the people in question no longer will be able to fill their proper place in society.

